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New York

President	Mr. Gurirab	(Namibia)
Members	Argentina	Mr. Listre
	Bangladesh	Mr. Chowdhury
	Canada	Mr. Heinbecker
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	France	Mr. Doutriaux
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Malaysia	Mr. Hasmy
	Mali	Mr. Kassé
	Netherlands	Mr. Hamer
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Tunisia	Mr. Ben Mustapha
	Ukraine	Mr. Krokhmal
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Grainger
	United States of America	Ms. Soderberg

Agenda

Women and peace and security.

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00-70589 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Women and peace and security

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Australia, Belarus, Croatia, Cyprus, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Japan, Liechtenstein, Malawi, Mozambique, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, South Africa, the United Arab Emirates, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Ms. Wensley (Australia), Mr. Ling (Belarus), Mr. Šimonović (Croatia), Mr. Zackheos (Cyprus), Mr. Atoki (Democratic Republic of the Congo), Mr. Aboulgheit (Egypt), Mr. Hussein (Ethiopia), Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala), Mr. Sharma (India), Mr. Widodo (Indonesia), Mr. Akasaka (Japan), Ms. Fritsche (Liechtenstein), Mr. Juwayeyi (Malawi), Mr. Santos (Mozambique), Mr. Powles (New Zealand), Mr. Brattskar (Norway), Mr. Ahmad (Pakistan), Mr. Sun Joun-Yung (Republic of Korea), Mr. Mahbubani (Singapore), Mr. Kumalo (South Africa), Mr. Samhan (United Arab Emirates), Mr. Mwakawago (United Republic of Tanzania) and Mr. Jokonya (Zimbabwe) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend invitations under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Ms. Angela King, Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, and Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Ms. King to take a seat at the Council table.

I invite Ms. Heyzer to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the council to document S/2000/693, which contains the text of a letter dated 12 July 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations.

I now invite members of the Council to view a short video presentation on women and peace.

A video tape was played in the Council Chamber.

The President: I now give the floor to the Secretary-General, my friend and brother, Kofi Annan.

The Secretary-General: Let me thank and congratulate the presidency of the Security Council for its initiative in holding this meeting on women and armed conflict. The theme chosen is crucial, for it brings together two vital parts of the United Nations mission. The Charter tells us that the Organization was created "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". It also proclaims the equal rights of men and women. We must live up to both challenges or we shall not succeed fully in either.

As this Council knows better than anyone, the nature of conflict has changed a great deal in the decades since our Charter was written. The age of inter-State wars has been replaced by the age of ethnic conflict. Militias have multiplied, and small arms have proliferated. International law has been flouted. Civilians not only make up the majority of victims; they are increasingly the targets of conflict. From rape and displacement to the denial of the right to food and

health care, women bear more than their fair share of the suffering.

But women, who know the price of conflict so well, are also often better equipped than men to prevent or resolve it. For generations women have served as peace educators, both in their families and in their societies. They have proved instrumental in building bridges rather than walls. They have been crucial in preserving social order when communities have collapsed.

We in the United Nations know at first hand the invaluable support women provide to our peacekeepers, by organizing committees, non-governmental organizations and church groups that help ease tensions and by persuading their menfolk to accept peace. Partly for that reason, we are making special efforts to recruit more women for our peacekeeping and peacemaking missions, and to make all our operations more aware of gender issues.

The United Nations has learned the hard way that peace and security depends on rapid response to early indications of conflict. We know that conflict prevention requires imaginative strategies. We know that conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peace-building call for creative and flexible approaches. In all these areas, we have seen examples of women playing an important role — not least on my own continent, Africa.

And yet the potential contribution of women to peace and security remains severely under-valued. Women are still grossly under-represented at the decision-making level, from conflict prevention to conflict resolution to post-conflict reconciliation.

We are here today because we are determined to change that, and because we know that changing it is the responsibility of all of us — men and women alike. This Council, in its statement on International Women's Day this year, acknowledged that women and girls are particularly affected by the consequences of armed conflict. The Council recognized that peace is inextricably linked to equality between men and women and it declared that maintaining and promoting peace and security require women's equal participation in decision-making.

I am here today to ask the Council to do everything in its power to translate that statement into action; to help ensure that women and girls in conflict situations are protected, that perpetrators of violence against women in conflict are brought to justice, and that women are able to take their rightful and equal place at the decision-making table on questions of peace and security. I am confident that Ms. King, Ms. Heyzer and others who will speak here today will help show the way.

The President: The next speaker on my list is Ms. Angela King, Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, to whom the Council has extended an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure, and on whom I now call.

Ms. King: I am particularly honoured today, as Special Adviser on Gender Issues, to have the opportunity to speak in this debate, which is so historic, when for the first time the Council has decided to devote an entire open discussion to the topic "Women and peace and security".

It is only fairly recently that the experience of women and girls in armed conflict has been discussed, and then discussion has usually concentrated on their role as victims. Today's debate will show that we have come a long way in a relatively short time. Your country's strong leadership, Mr. President, in holding the landmark May seminar which marked this year's tenth anniversary of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group resulted in the historic Windhoek Declaration and Namibia Plan of Action on "Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations". This achievement has won universal admiration among all those fighting for women's right to participate in all aspects of the peace process. It and your distinguished chairing of the General Assembly's twenty-third special session, "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", which immediately followed in June, constitute important steps along the way to considering the United Nations peace operations from the point of view of both women and men.

Other important developments have led to today's meeting. They include the Council's decision to take a thematic approach to its work; the recognition that the Council gave — under the chair of Bangladesh — on International Women's Day, 8 March, to women as actors in the peace process; the discussion on the situation of women in Afghanistan, which took place in

April, led by the representative of Canada; and the Council's resolution 1314 (2000) of 11 August.

The timeliness of this discussion is also significant. The Secretary-General has just returned from an area where he undoubtedly had an opportunity to see at first hand the role women and men should play in their societies to bring about peace and to rebuild those societies. The discussion also coincides with the consideration of the Brahimi Panel's report (S/2000/809) on peace operations and its implementation.

There are three broad areas to be considered in the context of today's discussion: how armed conflict affects women; how women actually respond to conflict, the peace process and post-conflict reconstruction; and how we plan strategically for a future in which women are equal partners with men in enhancing our effectiveness in peace operations.

Today I would like to concentrate on the two latter points, drawing on my experience as Chief of Mission in the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa (UNOMSA).

What do women actually do in conflict situations, and how do they respond? The Secretary-General has repeatedly emphasized the changing nature of war. He has noted that modern warfare is increasingly conducted within, rather than between, States, and that the Security Council is now called on to deal with such conflicts. He has stressed that more and more non-State actors are protagonists in armed conflict; even children become involved. The proliferation of small arms and the ease with which they can be acquired, clearly shown in the Department for Disarmament Affairs and Department of Public Information video documentary "Armed to the Teeth", has also added a new dimension.

The socio-economic fabric of a country has now to be the major focus of attention. Societal dynamics thus become a key guide to finding entry points into resolving disputes. Groups within each society, and especially women's groups, non-governmental, religious and other groups, have a major role to play. Whether these groups were formed before the conflict or during it is not important. What is important is that they must be part of all stages of the peace negotiations, in planning for the future, in rebuilding and in crafting preventive strategies to avoid conflict.

Often, those of us who have seen the value of women's participation in peace operations at first hand are challenged by the sceptics to present empirical rather than anecdotal findings. In this connection, I am pleased to report on the results of a joint three-year effort of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), my office and the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, a study that was supported by the generous funding of several Member States. This study, "Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Operations" has just been finalized.

The study looks at five peace operations, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, El Salvador, Namibia and South Africa. It answers the sceptics by giving objective and empirical findings on what women staff do in missions; whether and how they influence the outcomes; and how their participating equally with men can improve the efficiency of United Nations peacekeeping. The Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action were informed by these findings.

Exactly what does this study tell us? It shows unequivocally that when there is a critical mass of women in a mission — at least 30 per cent — local women are more easily mobilized to join peace committees. This occurred in South Africa, El Salvador and Namibia, where women actively promoted voter education and the rights of individual women to vote. In other words, women's participation in United Nations missions empowers local women and may inspire them to organize for the achievement of a democratic society.

Women's participation has the capacity to expand the debate a little further so that it may encompass more diverse subjects, including those that may be more relevant to women and children. Women are frequently less hierarchical in dealing with local communities and listen more, thereby having better insights into the root causes of conflict. Local women are more likely to confide in women peacekeepers on such matters as rape and other sexual violence. The presence of a critical mass of women appears to foster confidence and trust among the local population, and this is critical to successful operations, such as in El Salvador. Women are active negotiators and able to see more clearly issues that affect women differently than men.

Women's participation in all aspects of a mission can help to break down stereotypes held by women in many local communities, especially where women peacekeepers serve in a broad spectrum of the activities of a mission. This has had a spin-off effect on the participation of local women in decision-making positions. Women political monitors are just as willing and capable of serving in dangerous or isolated areas as men, and do so just as effectively.

The study also shows that mixed teams of women and men, a significant proportion of women team leaders, women special representatives or heads of mission, or a conscious effort by a special representative to seek the best staff, whether women or men, has a positive influence on the outcome. Women also respond by participating in the troop-contributing countries' military and civilian police contingents. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations has made strenuous efforts to encourage Member States to send women on missions, on the basis of equity, as their presence can assist in defusing potentially tense situations. Much more should be done in order to encourage women to enter this service.

What do this and other studies tell us about what local women do? There is abundant evidence to show that even when having to flee to safety with their families or protecting them in refugee or displaced-persons camps, women take on a number of peace-building activities.

Women are active at both formal and informal levels. With few exceptions, women are not present in formal peace negotiations. However, women have been part of these negotiations, as we saw in the field in Burundi, and in Guatemala and South Africa. Somali women helped to bring the clan leaders back into the negotiations at one stage and were permitted to join the negotiations as observers.

Most of the activities, however, take place at the informal level. Grass-roots women's organizations in several countries have sponsored peace education; encouraged child soldiers to lay down arms; organized groups advocating peace across party and ethnic lines; organized campaigns against small arms, such as the Organization of African Unity (OAU) African Women's Committee on peace and development; influenced repatriation processes and established services for returning exiles, such as in Guatemala; contributed to ending conflict; negotiated the release of hostages; and established legal support groups to get recognition for women's rights to land and household property which may have been in the name of a spouse killed or "disappeared" in a conflict.

Women at the local level are a rich resource waiting to be systematically tapped by the international community. Many aspects of these informal activities have been encouraged, supported financially and documented by the United Nations and its agencies. In this connection, in addition to the work of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Department for Disarmament Affairs should be mentioned. Special mention should also be made of the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Food Programme and the World Health Organization. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) should also be credited with pioneering work at the national and grass-roots levels. Good practices have been identified, studied and published, including the study by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, "Women and Post-Conflict Reconstruction". The exchange of information on these practices has enabled the United Nations system to encourage States engaged in rehabilitation to work in partnership with and sustain women's groups and civil society engaged in these essential but often unrecognized activities. Capacity-building for leadership and governance led by UNDP and UNIFEM has greatly facilitated women's ability to play constructive roles.

These entities are all members of the Administrative Committee on Coordination's Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality, which I chair. We have lately formed a Task Force on Women and Peace and Security to strengthen collaboration on this critical issue.

This brings me to our vision for the future. The basic blueprint appears in the Beijing Platform for Action, the Beijing + 5 outcome document, the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action. It also appears in the many powerful statements from

women's groups that we heard yesterday in the Council's Arria-formula meeting.

The planning of any mission must include gender equality aspects. The mandate of the mission and the guidelines for special representatives must clearly indicate that gender considerations must be integrated into the mission's goals and the head of mission be accountable. Each mission should have a plan for incorporating gender issues into all aspects of the mission's work. There should be a gender unit, adequately staffed and resourced to provide the necessary backstopping on the mission site, and one in DPKO for overall oversight. I am pleased to state that DPKO has established two such units — one in East Timor and one in Kosovo — and gender focal points in Sierra Leone and Western Sahara. All sectors of the transition or rebuilding process should take gender issues into account. Greater attention must be paid to ensuring the appointment of women as special representatives, in accordance with the Brahimi report and the call by women heads of State and Government of 5 September. The Council may wish to ensure that all the reports that it receives on missions contain information and data on the extent to which a gender perspective has been introduced and on the number and level of women working in the various missions. Working with the agencies on the ground, the political and development wings of the mission should organize the mobilization of community groups, especially women's groups, and expand the pool of skills needed to sustain the peace process. A roster of such groups could be kept by DPKO, in collaboration with regional bodies and agencies. The code of conduct for peacekeepers should be regularly updated and where there are infringements, there should be a continuation of apprehension and discipline. Should it be decided to appoint a new assistant secretary-general in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, as proposed in the Panel's report, strong consideration should be given to appointing a woman to one of the three assistant secretary-general posts in the Department.

In closing, may I recall the main finding of the joint study made by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Division for the Advancement of Women. It was that the most important lesson learned is that lessons are not always learned. Lessons from Namibia and South Africa had little effect on Cambodia or Bosnia Herzegovina, for example. Gender equality issues are absolutely essential to the success of any peace operation. We cannot exclude half the world's resources from participating in peace.

The fundamental human right to have and to enjoy equality is a given. It was emphasized by the Beijing Conference and reaffirmed again in the Beijing +5 outcome document and even more so at the Millennium Declaration. There can be no peace without gender equality and no development without both peace and equality. Without the equal and fair participation of women in decision-making positions in the United Nations and also in Member States, as well as in this central organ of the United Nations, we will never achieve the vision outlined in the United Nations Charter. May this discussion and the decisions that follow be those in which we demonstrate that, at least in the area of women and peace and security, this is one lesson that we have learned and intend to put into action.

The President: I thank Ms. King for her kind words addressed to my country and to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, to whom the Council has extended an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure. I give her the floor.

Ms. Heyzer (United Nations Development Fund for Women): I am honoured to participate in the Council's first debate on women and peace and security, chaired by the Foreign Minister of Namibia. The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and women worldwide congratulate the presidency for its vision in convening this historic event.

I want to begin by paying the kind of tribute that is necessary to the Secretary-General for his strong message and commitment, and for his presence here today. UNIFEM shares the views of Ms. King and fully supports her work to mainstream gender in peace support operations.

It is significant that this debate should be taking place on the first United Nations Day of this millennium, as many of the issues involved go to the heart of our Charter.

The Council's actions on the themes of conflict in Africa, the protection of civilians, and children and armed conflict set the stage for this debate, but the discussion today on women and peace and security has

a very specific focus. We are here today because the intertwining forces of conflict and gender inequality threaten international peace and security. We are here because women continue to be targeted in wars, because rape and sexual violence continue to be used as weapons of war, because the vast majority of all refugees and displaced people are women and children. We are here because women have played a leadership role in the cause of peace, but their efforts have not been recognized, supported or given the kind of reward that is necessary.

The subject of today's debate is close to all of our hearts. Members heard the voice of Agnes from Uganda, who spoke out because nearly all girls abducted into armed groups are forced into sexual slavery. The vast majority become infected with sexually transmitted diseases and, increasingly, HIV/AIDS. In addition, women and girls are forced into sex for safe passage, food and other kinds of protection. Women are seldom protected from these threats. Their aggressors are not punished. What kind of message does this send to the people who continue to rape, exploit, torture and mutilate?

We are here today to support collective action against the most chilling consequences of this destruction of women. That is the focus of today's debate: women's protection in armed conflict and their participation in peace processes.

The focus on human security and national security makes up the two sides of the same global coin. I would like to put it to the Council that, without international action, women caught in conflicts will have no security of any kind, whatever the definition, and that, without their participation, the peace process itself suffers, for there will be neither justice nor development. In your own words, Mr. President, women are half of every group and community. Are they therefore not half of every form of solution? How can we, in all good conscience, bring warlords to the peace table and not women?

For almost 10 years, UNIFEM has worked to provide assistance to women in crisis and supported their participation in the building of peace. I will not overstate our reach. We are a small Fund and our impact is based on synergetic partnership with sister funds, such as the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Children's Fund, as well as with the women's movement.

We have shaped our activities for women in conflict situations around five points. These form the core of our agenda for peace and security and relate to specific actions the Council could take to improve the protection of women and support their peace-building efforts. If we are to deal fairly with women and girls in conflict, these must be acted upon with urgency.

First, as to understanding the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, no full-scale assessment has yet been undertaken. This must happen. We need to examine every aspect of the consequences of conflict for women in order to guide future action. Ironically, this has happened for children, but not yet for women, their primary caretakers and among those most affected by conflict.

But understanding the impact is simply not enough. We must also act with greater sensitivity. We know without question that unless there is such sensitivity, there will be severe consequences. This was the case in Kosovo last year. Thousands of displaced men, women and children had gathered together in a stadium. With a megaphone, an official made a broadcast announcement for all women who had been raped to report to a particular area. Not a single woman came forward. Not a single woman was prepared to risk the stigma or the potential effect of having identified herself publicly in this way. As a result, every single survivor lost the chance of holding her aggressors accountable and of receiving life-saving support. Understanding the way conflict affects women and girls is crucial to ensuring their protection and to designing the policies and programmes that are necessary.

Secondly, with respect to improving protection and assistance for women and girls, in my visits to war-torn countries, I have seen these gaps with painful clarity. I have heard about the unanswered fate of mothers and the thousands of children born of rape. In camps, I discovered that items as basic as sanitary towels were not considered essential humanitarian relief. In conflict after conflict, I have met the mothers of the disappeared. I have walked through valleys of widows — huge communities of women left alone to fend for themselves and their families. These women live each day choked with painful memories of their own torture and of that of their loved ones. They bleed

and live with physical and emotional scars and, as if this were not enough, they are also struggling to reclaim their property, their inheritance and their land. In fact, some have also to struggle to retain their children.

Protection of and humanitarian assistance for women are glaringly inadequate in the kind of examples that we have seen. We have seen the failure of political settlements to protect women's rights. This is at the very core of this debate.

Thirdly, as to supporting women's leadership in peace-building, women caught up in conflicts are activists, caretakers, providers and survivors. We know that some women participate actively in conflicts, but the vast majority have held their families and communities together.

From the grass roots to the peace table, we have supported the participation of women in peace-building. We try to leverage political, financial and technical support so that women can have an impact on peace efforts nationally. Guatemalan women, South African women and others have set inspiring examples of peace-building across class, clans, political affiliation and ethnicity. As you have seen on video, up until four months ago the situation of women and girls had been ignored in the Burundi process. A precedent was set in that country, and the entire peace agreement has benefited. Now, support for implementation remains a challenge.

Fourthly, with respect to bringing a gender perspective to intergovernmental peace and security efforts, peace support operations establish the framework for international and regional action. Much attention has been given to increasing the number of women in these operations, at the helm and among the ranks. Although a few women have served at the highest levels, I think it is sobering today to point out that of the 61 current Special and Personal Representatives and Envoys of the Secretary-General serving in peace support functions, not a single one is a woman.

The placement of gender advisers in Kosovo, East Timor and other countries has presented a new model if they can be adequately supported. But all such arrangements must involve women and provide gender experts in their design and implementation. There is no acceptable reason for protecting women in some countries and not others. I believe that women's concerns will only be addressed only when women, in significant numbers, are there to represent them. But having a woman commander will not alone ensure that the mandate of the operation deals with gender. Having a woman judge will not ensure that war crimes against women are prosecuted. There is more that we have to do.

Gender expertise must inform the planning of these operations from the very beginning. For example, in disarmament, reintegration must be designed to meet the special needs of women combatants, of the girls and women who have been abducted into armed groups or of the families of former soldiers who are trying to return to civilian life. Electoral systems must take women into account, as voters or as candidates. Civilian police must address the issues of trafficking and sexual violence which are associated with conflict. I name these few examples to show how the Security Council can help ensure that international and regional initiatives not only benefit women but are also strengthened by them.

Fifthly, with regard to supporting gender justice in the post-conflict case, resources are depleted after conflicts, infrastructure is destroyed and social, economic and political relationships are strained. The success of development depends on the use of every available resource, including people. Women who have held social and economic fragments together represent the most precious and under-used of these resources. Unless a country's legal and electoral frameworks deal with gender equality, then no matter what happens after conflict, no matter how peaceful a transition, the entire country will never have a fair chance at development.

During the transition to peace, a unique opportunity exists to put in place a gender-responsive framework for a country's development. Nowhere is this more possible than in East Timor. Last week during my visit there, I saw a country struggling to rebuild. I was inspired by the women of East Timor, together with the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor, working to improve the form of legislation and to strengthen local capacity to advocate for gender-sensitive laws and policies.

Barely four months ago I had the privilege of leading an international group to Jerusalem to support a common women's agenda for peace in the Middle East. Far away from the limelight of formal negotiations, Palestinian and Israeli women have been struggling and

engaging in dialogue ever since the 1980s, when such contact was illegal. Back in June, they were determined to tackle the thorniest issues. Their ability to make headway on almost all the moot points, including Jerusalem, was fuelled by the sense of urgency they shared about the delays in implementing signed agreements. This was leading, in their view, to a dangerous erosion of public trust in the leadership of both sides and to the potential outbreak of violence. If only their concerns had been heard.

Today, I urge the leadership on both sides not to ignore women's roles and contributions in this process. I urge them to build on partnerships where they exist and which women have been able to shape.

The outcome of today's debate can go a long way towards sustaining peace. If I may, with the kind of humility that is needed, I will suggest a number of ways in which the Council could improve women's protection in conflict and support their role in peace-building.

First, the Council could ensure that human rights observation and verification and peacekeeping operations focus on gender-based violations and women's human rights. The security of women is the best indicator of the security of a nation. Any early warning system must take women's voices into account.

Secondly, the Council could call for all peacekeeping personnel to be trained in their responsibilities to women and children. The in-service training should be provided as soon as a mission is assembled. This is not meant to be a substitute for what needs to be done at the national level.

Thirdly, the Council could call for the elaboration of a code of conduct for peacekeeping personnel and the establishment of clear reporting on sexual violence in a peacekeeping environment. This should include enforcement and monitoring mechanisms for peacekeeping personnel, through the creation of an ombudsperson, an inspector general or an office created especially for that purpose.

Fourthly, the Council could ensure that field operations protect and support humanitarian assistance for women and girls, especially those who are refugees and displaced. Special measures should be taken to protect women and girls from rape and other forms of sexual violence.

Fifthly, the Council could ensure that the peace-building elements of an operation are gender-sensitive, particularly in designing the kind of disarmament programmes, in strengthening governance and public security institutions and in defining the role of civilian police. These are the first steps for ensuring that women are central to post-conflict development.

Sixthly, the Council could ensure that any support it offers to a peace process, any investigation of disputes or any attempts at settlement make explicit the need to involve women and address the substantive concerns they bring to the table.

Finally, the Council could deepen its commitment to women by supporting the study called for by Ms. Graça Machel for a full-scale assessment of the impact of armed conflict on women and of women's role in peace-building. This is long overdue. For our part, as UNIFEM we stand ready to support this call and any other that the Council deems necessary. We may be small but we are effective, and we can find the resources and the necessary support.

Women in conflict situations have special needs and have made important contributions to peace and security. Recognizing and supporting both of these aspects with equal vigour can prevent many lifetimes of untold sorrow and pain.

The President: I thank Ms. Heyzer for her kind words addressed to me.

I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Botswana and Rwanda in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda.

In accordance with the usual practice, I propose, with the Council's consent, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Legwaila (Botswana) and Mr. Mutaboba (Rwanda) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): It is a pleasure to see you, the Foreign Minister of Namibia, presiding over this historic open debate on women and peace and security. My delegation wishes to express its appreciation to you and to the delegation of Namibia for this initiative which demonstrates your country's commitment and your own personal commitment to the advancement of women.

We also wish to recall the leadership you provided as President of the twenty-third special session of the United Nations General Assembly, "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century." I also wish to express appreciation to the Secretary-General and to Ms. Angela King, Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, and to Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), for their important statements.

The Council's treatment of the issue before us comes in the wake of the commemoration on 8 March of International Women's Day, when, for the first time, the Council gave recognition to the role of women in the peace process.

It will be recalled that the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action identified the impact of armed conflict and other deep-rooted conflicts on women as one of its critical areas of concern. It recognized that the welfare of women is threatened by violence and destructive conflicts. Peace-building work is therefore fundamental to the health and welfare of women living in communities and societies suffering from deep-rooted and violent conflict.

Today's debate in the Security Council is therefore a timely recognition of the increasingly disproportionate effects of war on civilians, particularly on women and children, and the important leadership role of women in the prevention and resolution of armed conflict. It remains a matter of serious concern that women have become caught in the centre of violent conflict and often become the direct and deliberate victims of the most egregious abuses committed by parties to armed conflict. Girls and women continue to be victims of rape, trafficking, forced prostitution, abduction and torture. The video presentation we saw at the beginning of this meeting provided a poignant reminder of the plight of so many women throughout the world.

Despite these challenges, women have become increasingly effective participants at the peace table and have continued to assist in creating an enabling environment for conflict prevention, peacemaking, peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction. The role of women in preserving social order and fostering reconciliation cannot be overlooked without serious consequences for the peace process, for, if peace is to be actively and effectively pursued, gender-based exclusion must be addressed. Indeed, we must recognize that sustainable peace can hardly be achieved if the experiences and perspectives of some 50 per cent of the population are not given the attention they deserve.

Yesterday, members of the Council had an opportunity, during an Arria-formula meeting, to exchange views with representatives of civil society. We heard from representatives of non-governmental organizations, working at the grass-roots level in many countries, about the need for sustained attention to the plight of women victims of violent conflict and their crucial role in fostering a culture of peace in their communities. The recommendations that emanated from that meeting deserve the attention of the Council, particularly because they came directly from women who are victims, as well as participants in seeking peace.

One of the conclusions drawn from yesterday's discussion, which we strongly support, is the need to ensure women's adequate representation at all levels of the decision-making process. The role of women in conflict prevention has in many parts of the world proved important, and, in this context, comprehensive and systematic measures undertaken to prevent the resurgence or escalation of conflict by civil society, including grass-roots women's organizations, are particularly noteworthy and deserve the support of the international community. We therefore support the call by Ms. Graça Machel, to which Ms. Heyzer alluded, for a study on women and armed conflict.

The initiatives undertaken by women in Somalia, in Burundi, in East Timor, in Guatemala, in Sierra Leone and in many other countries to contribute to the creation of a peaceful and secure environment point in many respects to the important role of women as equal partners in securing peace. In Somalia, women have effectively mobilized civil society to promote dialogue among the warring factions and have given invaluable support to the national peace process. We certainly

hope that women will find their place in the Government when it is constituted.

These efforts, which have recently engaged the attention of the Council, point unequivocally to the strategic importance of women in relation to peace. However, despite the role of women in promoting peace and the progress made in implementing various international agreements, much remains to be done to ensure that women are increasingly seen as equal partners. The Windhoek Declaration, adopted in Namibia in May 2000, represents a valuable step in highlighting the importance of this issue and of mainstreaming a gender perspective into peace support operations.

In recent assessments of United Nations peace operations, a number of important elements which are relevant to the incorporation of a gender dimension in peacekeeping have unfortunately been overlooked. It is also a matter of concern for my delegation that women are still under-represented in decision-making in the area of conflict resolution. It is in this context that, while we recognize the important recommendations contained in the Brahimi report, we call for the implementation of these recommendations, including, where appropriate, the participation of women at all levels.

My delegation recognizes the steps that the Secretary-General has taken to appoint women as special representatives and special envoys, but we believe that much more needs to be done, and in this we call upon Member States, because it is Member States that have a responsibility to present for consideration qualified women for appointment at high levels.

It is important not only to address the conceptual and structural framework of peace operations but also to ensure that attention is given to those institutional elements which determine the participation of those with the capacity to make a difference. The record of women in conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peace-building should certainly be taken into account.

My delegation fully supports the view that comprehensive gender considerations should be incorporated into peacekeeping missions. In support of this approach, Member States should ensure that they increase the number of women in their military and civilian police forces who are qualified to serve in peace operations. Additionally, Member States need to ensure that gender sensitivity is incorporated into their national training programmes for military and civilian police designated to participate in peacekeeping.

The sensitization of personnel to the needs and vulnerabilities of women is critical and must be complemented by concrete steps to deal promptly with violations of international human rights and humanitarian law committed by peacekeeping personnel, particularly those against women and girls. Personnel involved in United Nations peace-building activities should also be given appropriate training on the protection and rights of women as a matter of priority.

In this connection, we note the existence of gender focal points in some United Nations missions, including in East Timor, Kosovo and Sierra Leone, and, based on the lessons learned in these missions, we believe that consideration must be given to establishing gender units in all peacekeeping missions. Ending impunity for sexual and gender-based violence in situations of conflict remains a matter for priority attention. Crimes such as rape, sexual torture, forced impregnation and sexual slavery continue to represent serious violations of the rights of women. My delegation welcomes the fact that the International Criminal Court has defined these crimes as grave breaches of international law. We stress the importance of bringing to justice those who violate the rights of women, and we note the attention that has been given to prosecuting such crimes in the International Criminal Tribunals for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia.

It is not only important that women be allowed to participate in peace operations, but that they be given special attention in reconstruction and post-conflict peace-building initiatives. Given that women have been particularly victimized during conflict, special attention also needs to be given to their needs and potential in formulating and implementing national rehabilitation, reconstruction and development programmes. In this context, the Council must ensure that special attention is given to the needs of women in reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction. The involvement of refugee and internally displaced women in the design and management of humanitarian activities represents also an important element. The full implementation of gender mainstreaming in the post-conflict reconstruction period should not be overlooked.

We would like to commend the Secretary-General for his commitment and initiatives aimed at integrating a gender sensitive approach within the Organization. This was emphasized in the report to the Millennium Assembly. It is also in this context that we welcome the report on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective In Multidimensional Peace Operations, prepared by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in cooperation with the Department for the Advancement of Women.

We wish to thank Assistant Secretary-General King for presenting the results of this study to the Council this morning. The study emphasizes the impact that the participation of women can have on United Nations peacekeeping missions. We also thank her for the recommendations for future action, which the Council will consider later this month in the context of the draft resolution we expect to adopt. As the Beijing Platform for Action so aptly reminds us, in a world of continuing instability and violence, the implementation of cooperative approaches to peace and security is urgently needed. Women cannot be left out of the equation.

Today, as we celebrate United Nations Day, it is fitting that we draw attention to the role of women as agents for the promotion of peace, security and development. The time has come for us to move from rhetoric to action. The women of the world expect no less from the Security Council.

The President: I thank the representative of Jamaica for her kind words addressed to my country and to me.

Ms. Soderberg (United States): The United States warmly welcomes this open debate on women and peace and security. We pay a special tribute to Secretary-General Annan for his remarks and fully concur with his report statement:

> "Equality of rights, opportunities and access to resources between men and women are fundamental requirements" (*A/52/871, para. 89*)

in building a durable peace.

I want to join Ambassador Durrant in paying a special tribute to you, Mr. President, and to Ambassador Andjaba, for your leadership in bringing about this important meeting. I also want to pay a special warm welcome to Ms. Angela King, Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, and to Ms. Heyzer, Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women. This invitation this morning is long overdue and I hope that this body will meet the challenge that you have put to us today. It is an historic challenge that you put before us. We warmly welcome that.

I also want to pay a special welcome to our guests in the gallery. I think your participation and support are very important and I think this is the first time I have ever heard applause in this Chamber. So you are enlivening it.

Today's meeting must not only make us more aware of the important role women play in preventing conflict, encouraging reconciliation and helping to rebuild conflict-ridden societies, but it also must spur us to concrete action. We, in the international community, have failed to make maximum use of the contributions of women in our efforts to promote peace and security throughout the world. As Secretary of State Albright pointed out in a recent speech to a group of businesswomen, "in too many places, women remain an undervalued and underdeveloped human resource."

We applaud the unwavering efforts of the United Nations and its specialized agencies to confront problems that mostly affect women. The work of these bodies and the international community's moral and financial support for such efforts has changed the lives of many, both young and old. Working together, we have taken steps to promote equality of opportunity, educate women and girls, change the unbalanced inheritance and divorce laws, advance political and economic rights and eradicate traditional practices harmful to women and girls.

Much of our attention has been directed toward protecting women, especially from the devastating effects of armed conflict, including forced displacement, trafficking of women, torture, rape and other acts of sexual violence, as well as a host of other crimes. For example, the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights focused on women solely as victims of armed conflict. While the issue of protection of women cannot be ignored, I hope that Security Council action will emphasize the leadership role women can and should play in restoring peace.

Women are an under-utilized positive force for peace. The Fourth World Conference on Women recognized that they must be fully involved in preventing and resolving conflicts. We must actively promote formal mechanisms, which support a

consistent female presence at the peace table, in peacekeeping operations and in the peace building efforts to reconstruct institutions vital to lasting stability.

The Secretary-General, by appointing qualified women to visible positions of influence, has set a laudable example for us all to follow. Deputy Secretary-General Louise Frechette, High Commissioners Mary Robinson and Sadako Ogata, the United Nations Children's Fund's Carol Bellamy and the World Food Programme's Catherine Bertini, to name just a few, demonstrate daily that women do make a difference in defusing conflicts and promoting equality, peace and security. The challenge before us is to emulate their achievements in other international and regional organizations, in national Governments and across all levels of society. The United States applauds the appointment of these women, but we want to see more done.

In particular, we need more women as Special Representatives of the Secretary-General, as special envoys and as human rights investigators and monitors. We hope the Secretary-General will strive to appoint more, fully qualified women to these positions, as well as those within his own Secretariat. We strongly encourage Member States to bring such candidates to his attention and to support the idea of the United Nations maintaining a roster of qualified women maintained as part of the United Nations Standby Arrangements System.

We need more than influential women at the highest levels of power and prestige. The United Nations must ensure that women's voices are heard wherever the United Nations assists in the settlement of conflicts and in post-conflict peace-building. With all due respect to my colleagues, just look around this room. A good place to start would be for Member States to appoint more women as ambassadors to the United Nations. Certainly one woman Permanent Representative, the distinguished Patricia Durrant, out of 15 on the Security Council, is at least 6 or 7 too few. Ten women out of 189 Permanent Representatives is a sad commentary on the state of women in leadership positions of Member States. If we are to heed President Theo-Ben Gurirab's challenge that we all just heard in the video to make women half of every solution, Member States must be able to do better than five per cent.

In all phases of peacekeeping and peace-building missions the presence of women must be visible and consistent. When possible, fact-finding missions should include gender advisors and the terms of reconciliation and reconstruction should draw on the expertise of women's community groups. The immediate aftermath of a conflict provides a unique window of opportunity to rebuild, with the equal participation of women, the public security institutions vital to lasting stability. In order to facilitate this, States should be committed to gender balance in their contributions to civilian police and other peacekeeping contingents and to assisting other States in achieving a gender-balanced perspective.

In place after place, from Northern Ireland to Guatemala to South Africa, we see that women are most effective when they are able to organize and be heard. Our First Lady's involvement in the organization Vital Voices has demonstrated around the world this fact time and again. We, as members of the Security Council, cannot be content with token representation of half of the world's population. The Security Council should consider establishing a very specifically mandated expert panel or working group to report on mechanisms that will ensure equal representation of women in peacekeeping and peace-building operations.

We also need to prepare our United Nations peacekeepers for encounters with the entire population in a mission area. This means that peacekeepers — military, civilian and civil servants — should be trained in gender issues; and it means that they who violate women's most basic rights must be brought to justice. The training should focus on codes of conduct and cultural and societal norms with respect to women, and on the study of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

At managerial levels training should include the participation of women in institution-building, particularly in rule-of-law areas. The Training Unit of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations should develop exportable modules that may be used in national and regional programmes, and all United Nations training programmes must include elements on gender issues.

We encourage States to assist in other meaningful ways as well. The United States, for example, has provided funding to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to support the

Bosnian Women's Initiative, which promotes the reintegration of women into the economy. It emphasizes training, legal assistance and support for micro-enterprise projects. Likewise, the United States has supported the Rwanda Women's Initiative to address refugee women's reintegration. The Department of State has also provided support for the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, which operates in Sierra Leone, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan and the Sudan. Those programmes not only provide services to women in war-torn areas, but they also seek to integrate them into the political and economic lives of their countries.

As we move forward we should take care that our efforts to further empower women in no way disadvantage men. We should strive for equality, not special treatment. What we really need is a commitment from Member States of the United Nations, the Secretariat and all concerned to honour the obligations and promises already made to women. We should now look ahead to concrete initiatives in support of those promises.

In closing, let me again commend you and your delegation, Mr. President, for calling this important meeting today. I hope this meeting will be the beginning of regular discussions in this Chamber, and that one day there will be equal gender representation around this table and throughout these halls.

The President: I thank the representative of the United States for her kind words addressed to me and to my Permanent Representative.

Mr. Ben Mustapha (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): I would first of all like to express our appreciation to you, Mr. President, and to Ambassador Andjaba, for turning the attention of the Security Council to such an important subject as the one before us today.

I would also like to take this opportunity to declare my country's interest in any exchange of views in the Council having to do with humanitarian concerns resulting from conflict situations. We welcome the fact that the Council has given particular attention in recent years to such varied aspects of conflict situations as the plight of refugees and displaced persons, the protection of children in armed conflict, the protection of civilians during armed conflict and the protection of humanitarian personnel.

All these topics having been considered and debated in recent months, it is certainly worthwhile to underscore the importance of today's topic of debate: women and peace and security. The Council's participation in this area is particularly valuable, as the struggle to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women — and in particular in conflict situations — and to promote their rights is far from over, and should mobilize us all.

As has just been eloquently stated by the Secretary-General, Ms. King and Ms. Heyzer, women and girls were, and continue to be, the primary targets of all sorts of discriminatory violence. Indeed, they are among the first victims of armed conflict and are often reduced to the role of human shields in the hands of belligerents. Along with children, women represent 80 per cent of refugees and displaced persons, and are the first to suffer the worst acts of sexist violence, in particular rape and other forms of sexual abuse. They also constitute the majority of the victims of anti-personnel landmines, and are the most exposed to the scourge of HIV/AIDS because of increased sexual violence and the failure of health systems. As new conflicts erupt and tension and warfare intensify in various parts of the world, the number of poor and defenceless women suffering the horrors of violence and displacement increases, their traditional role is often changed overnight and their workload increases considerably.

The rights of women and girls constitute an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. Their suffering in armed conflict is a violation of international law on the protection and rights of civilians, which is fully applicable to women and girls, in particular the 1949 Geneva Convention and the obligations under its Additional Protocol of 1977 and the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocol of 25 May 2000. In this regard, we join the appeals made to the parties to every armed conflict to scrupulously and fully respect international law. We also believe that it is up to States to put an end to impunity and to punish those found guilty of crimes, including extortion and acts of sexist violence, against women and girls.

We encourage the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in all multidimensional peace operations, both at the national and international levels. We also encourage the undertaking of an analysis of gender equality in order to promote gender mainstreaming

during the planning of policies, strategies and programmes for peace and security.

In addition to Tunisia's commitment to gender equality and its policy of fostering the rights and improving the status of women, we recognize the important role women can play in all areas, including in conflict prevention, the maintenance of peace and peace-building. In this connection, we support the participation of women in peacekeeping operations and in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes. As women are the ones most exposed to the devastating effects of anti-personnel landmines, we stress the importance of educating them about the dangers of mines and about the intensive use of mine-detection techniques.

I would also like to draw attention to the adverse effects on women and girls of sanctions, which increase their vulnerability. Recent experience has indeed shown that sanctions have extremely negative consequences on civilians, and in particular on children and women.

Apart from their role in the economic and social spheres, women are increasingly playing an active role in the area of peace. In this regard, we would like to express our appreciation for the leading role played in the United Nations system by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), one of whose top priorities is the elimination of all forms of violence against women. UNIFEM must continue its efforts to promote the effective implementation of international conventions, particularly the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

In that regard, we support UNIFEM's efforts to promote women's participation in the decision-making process at all levels of peace-building, as well as its efforts in developing women's capacity-building in the area of conflict prevention and resolution. Moreover, the multidimensional nature of peacekeeping operations — in particular with regard to their political aspect, the protection of children, the holding of elections, refugee reintegration, humanitarian assistance and the protection of humanitarian workers, demining, institutional capacity-building at the local level and human rights — offers women an opportunity to contribute to peace and security, which will definitely help to improve the protection of women and young girls in situations of armed conflict.

We believe that women's commitment to peace is crucial in ensuring that peace agreements signed by political and military factions hold. We are also convinced that there must be real change not only in the words of the laws themselves, but also in people's mindsets and in social practices.

We hope that today's debate will help break that silence and that it will lead to a denunciation of violence against women in all its forms — physical, psychological and moral — especially in armed conflict. We wish also to express our support for initiatives and institutional measures to protect women and ensure their safety and security, particularly in armed conflict; we appeal to all States to cooperate to that end.

Finally, we emphasize the importance of implementing appropriate preventive measures to resolve conflicts, especially the use of dispute-settlement mechanisms set up by the United Nations and by other organizations such as the Organization of African Unity. We stress further the importance of the effective contribution that women can make in this regard.

Mr. Listre (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Let me begin, Sir, by saying how pleased my delegation is to see you presiding over this open debate. Your vast experience and ability were amply demonstrated throughout the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly and during the preparation and unfolding of the Millennium Summit. Argentina acknowledges and appreciates the traditional concern of the Government of Namibia with respect to the struggle for gender equality and for the promotion and protection of the rights of women — a concern shared by all other members of the Southern African Development Community and throughout the continent of Africa.

It is therefore no surprise that it is at the initiative of the Government of Namibia that the Council is today holding an open debate with a view to contributing to a better understanding of the relationship between women and international peace and security. We warmly welcome today's discussion of that topic.

Our thanks go also to Ms. Angela King, Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, and Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), for their statements.

On the many occasions when the Security Council has considered the link between women and peace and security, it has generally been to condemn the appalling consequences of armed conflict for women, as victims of violence, trafficking, slavery, anti-personnel landmines and forcible displacement. Here, the Argentine delegation will continue, as it has done in the past, tirelessly to uphold the imperative need for full respect for international humanitarian and human-rights norms.

War crimes against women and girls, as recognized by the International Criminal Court in its Rome statute, must not go unpunished. We take this opportunity to urge parties to armed conflicts to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, especially rape and other forms of sexual abuse.

Similarly, the Argentine Government voices its support for the creation of some kind of system to prevent sexual violence, exploitation and trafficking in women and girls among both civilian and military populations, including suitable procedures for the lodging of complaints that would protect the identify of informants, as well as mechanisms to supervise peacekeeping personnel. It seems to us that realities increasingly demand that a gender dimension must be present in all field operations.

My delegation believes that conflicts with an impact on women pose a grave threat to the future of generations to come, undermine the foundations of the safety and security of families and social protection systems and create the worst of climates for the moral, political and socio-economic survival of the communities in question. We vigorously condemn the manipulation of any conflict situation by the victors to deny women and girls their fundamental human rights, in particular the right to physical integrity, food, proper housing, education, employment and health services. We therefore continue to support all Council initiatives with a particular focus on the special needs of women affected by armed conflict.

We will also support measures that the Secretary-General may decide to take to ensure that peacekeeping personnel receive proper training on gender issues, especially during post-conflict repatriation, resettlement, rehabilitation, reintegration and reconstruction. Similarly, we welcome any proposal aimed at greater gender awareness on the part of Member States, so that this will be reflected in national training programmes for military personnel and civilian police serving in the field.

My delegation wishes now to refer not to the international community's unquestionable moral imperative to provide special protection for women and children during armed conflict, but rather to the need to understand that there is an important role that women can and must play in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building. It is worth recalling that on 8 March 2000, on International Women's Day and in the context of negotiations in the Preparatory Committee for the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, on Beijing + 5, the then President of the Security Council, Ambassador Chowdhury of Bangladesh, issued a press statement on behalf of the Council (Press release SC/6816), which observed that

> "peace is inextricably linked with equality between women and men".

Now, more than seven months later, today's historic debate is lending new power to that avowal.

Armed conflict has a special and disproportionate impact on women, and it is thus right to conclude that women have their own views which must be heeded in discussions of the best ways to avoid or settle conflicts and of how to organize the future of communities that have been affected by such conflicts. But, unfortunately, that is not how matters stand. Women are not sufficiently well represented at the decision-making level in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflicts. Argentina stresses the need for women to play a meaningful role in formulating policies and programmes to that end.

Here, we take note with satisfaction of the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations. As we have been doing elsewhere within the Organization, we urge the Secretary-General to appoint more women as Special Representatives and Special Envoys, and as his spokeswomen during missions of good offices related to peace and preventive diplomacy. We also appeal to Member States to take due account of the gender perspective when making national, regional and international appointments.

We encourage the participation of women in the negotiation of peace agreements, in all mechanisms for the implementation of such agreements and in the process of post-conflict reconstruction. Here, we urge that outmoded stereotypes of women's roles be abandoned.

In conclusion, Argentina hails the work towards greater awareness of gender issues in the context of armed conflict that has been taking place through the activities of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, of the various funds and programmes of the United Nations, such as UNIFEM, the United Nations Children's Fund and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and of local and international women's organizations. We encourage them to continue their efforts.

The President: I thank the representative of Argentina for the kind words he addressed to my country and to me.

Mr. Shen Guofang (China) *(spoke in Chinese)*: I should like at the outset, Sir, to thank you for presiding over this meeting and to express our appreciation to the delegation of Namibia for its initiative in convening it. I should like also to thank the Secretary-General for his statement and to express our deep appreciation for the statements made by his Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, Ms. Angela King, and by the Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), Ms. Noeleen Heyzer. Both statements touched on a number of important issues and also contained a number of important recommendations that merit serious consideration by the Council.

Women play an irreplaceable role in the creation of human civilization and in the promotion of social development. In China, there is a popular saying that "women hold up half of the sky". Without the full participation of women, therefore, our efforts to maintain international peace and security can be neither fruitful nor lasting.

However, women, more often than not, are the direct and principal victims of war and armed conflict. Given that the Security Council's primary responsibility is the maintenance of international peace and security, today's open debate on "Women and peace and security" will help the Council to better fulfil its mandate, entrusted to it by the Charter of the United Nations.

My delegation condemns all violent acts committed against women in time of armed conflict, and it urges all parties to conflicts strictly to abide by international humanitarian and human rights law. We also call on all Governments to investigate and bring to justice those who commit crimes against women. We hope also that the international community will intensify its efforts to protect and assist conflict-affected women and help them return to their homeland and resume their normal lives. We call on all concerned States, international organizations and non-governmental organizations to enhance their cooperation in this regard.

We also encourage women actively to participate in conflict prevention and settlement and in post-conflict reconstruction, and we hope that the international community will create favourable conditions in this regard.

I would like here to pay tribute to the role played by women in non-governmental organizations. We hope that women will also play a greater role in peacekeeping operations, in order better to assist women who have been affected by war and conflicts. Women should participate also in post-conflict reconstruction efforts. We would be encouraged to see, some day in the future, in a war-torn area, a peacekeeping operation composed entirely of women.

In our opinion, women do not fully participate in our work not because they are not capable of doing so but because we have not given this question sufficient attention. We look forward to an effective training programme in this regard.

In June, the United Nations convened, here in New York, a special session on the issue of women. The Political Declaration adopted at that session called on all Governments and countries to intensify their joint efforts in order better to protect women's rights and interests. Today's open debate could be considered part of the follow-up of the June special session. We hope that this meeting will make a significant contribution to enhancing the protection afforded to women and that it will lead to effective follow-up actions. We are hopeful also that this momentum will be maintained within the United Nations system. We believe that a full assessment, within the United Nations system, of the impact of armed conflict on women would be most useful.

The question of women is a cross-cutting one which the United Nations agencies have been deliberating for many years. The work of the Council should be synergetic with that of other agencies, for only in this way can we motivate all parties and players to make full use of the advantages provided by the United Nations system as a whole in order to achieve the best possible results.

The President: I thank the representative of China for the kind words he addressed to my delegation and to me.

Mr. Grainger (United Kingdom): The representative of France will shortly be making a full statement on behalf of the European Union, which the United Kingdom supports. I will therefore limit myself to a few additional points.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock, the British Permanent Representative, has repeatedly said that a careful consideration of the needs and rights of ordinary people should be at the heart of the Security Council's activities on conflict. We need to remember that civilians, so often the tragic victims of conflict, are individuals in specific circumstances.

The human toll of conflict hits women and girls hardest. They are exploited and targeted, often deliberately, as a strategic weapon. They form the majority of refugee populations and of the internally displaced. And they continue to be at risk even after the conflict, as the international human rights and humanitarian standards that should guarantee their security are all too rarely implemented.

We cannot treat this situation purely as a symptom of conflict. It is also a cause. Because of women's unique position in the social fabric, these threats continue to damage the long-term prospects for peace and security. This is the challenge that the Security Council faces. Much of what needs to be done will have to be incorporated into our regular work, as we examine individual country situations. But let us use this debate, and the draft resolution that will eventually be adopted, as an opportunity to push forward the agenda. We need to focus on concrete deliverables in areas where we can really make a difference.

We should concentrate in particular on three themes.

First, how do we make sure that the rights and particular concerns of women and girls are properly considered and acted on in the Council's everyday work?

We need the right sort of information to know what the problem is and the right sort of analysis to make our judgements. This is particularly the case when considering concrete operational issues, such as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, where women and girls may have different needs from those of male combatants.

One way of doing this would be to encourage the Secretary-General to incorporate analysis on gender issues in his regular reporting to the Council on country-specific issues. The Brahimi report recommends that an information and strategic analysis secretariat be established to improve the United Nations capacity to gather and analyse information. We support this recommendation and hope that gender expertise will be incorporated in this secretariat.

Secondly, what can we do to mainstream gender within the objectives and organizational structure of peacekeeping operations? Where the Secretary-General has recommended that specific gender concerns should be addressed in peacekeeping mandates, we should incorporate them into the heart of our decisions. Gender expertise should be included in peacekeeping operations and their staff mandated and provided with the resources to address women's particular concerns. Peacekeeping operations should also work closely with non-governmental organizations and civil society on the ground in these areas.

We need to develop greater sensitivity to the impact of peacekeeping operations on local populations. At yesterday's Arria-format meeting, we heard some dreadful tales of abuses of women's rights committed by the peacekeepers that are meant to provide stability and protection. That is why the United Kingdom and Canada have jointly financed work, in collaboration with the Lester Pearson Peacekeeping Training Centre, to produce training materials on gender for peacekeepers. We hope that this work will be of use to as wide a spectrum of troop-contributing countries as possible. We also encourage the Secretary-General to provide training on the rights and particular needs of women and girls to civilian staff serving in peacekeeping operations.

My third point is that we should not fall into the trap of seeing women and girls only as the victims of armed conflict. They can also play key roles in unlocking the door to peace. The full representation of women's groups at all levels of peace negotiations is vital to building sustainable peace and security. With this in mind, the United Kingdom is embarking on an ongoing programme of support for the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) to help it to build its capacity to act as a catalyst for women's participation in peace processes. This excellent programme will involve a review of activities by women's civil society and the development of an information repository and local field-based activities. We are proud to be able to help.

The United Kingdom is very pleased that Namibia has organized this timely debate today. We look forward to listening to the views of non-members, just as we welcomed the spirited discussion that took place with non-governmental organizations at yesterday's Arria-formula meeting. We particularly welcome the role of Angela King and of UNIFEM in providing support and advice in this process. However, we should not forget that it is the responsibility of all those involved in peace and security to ensure that gender considerations are mainstreamed into United Nations activities.

The next step is to negotiate a resolution that makes a difference. We should focus it on the areas where results can be achieved and concentrate on delivering a step change in the way the Council addresses the special needs of women and girls. The United Kingdom stands ready to play its full part in driving this important agenda forward.

The President: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom for the kind words he addressed to the Namibian delegation.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): Finally, the voices of women have reached the Security Council. It is significant that today — United Nations Day — we are beginning to address, in an open meeting of the Security Council, not only how conflicts shape the lives of women, but also how women are coming together to shape peace and security and what the Council can do to facilitate women's involvement in United Nations peacemaking and peace operations.

Yesterday, the Council members heard the concerns of civil society representatives on this issue and interacted with them. It was a so-called Arria-formula meeting. Although intended to be participatory, it took place behind closed doors and there were no official records. It would have been so much better to have had those presentations here in the Council Chamber.

Nevertheless, the women have spoken; they have made their recommendations to the Council. The onus is now on the Council to act. Through today's meeting, and through the resolution we will be adopting in a few days, we must send a powerful message that women need peace and, more importantly, that peace needs the involvement of women.

We wholeheartedly congratulate Namibia, in particular Ambassador Andjaba and his team, for their leadership in organizing these historic meetings of the Security Council on women and peace and security. Throughout your presidency of the General Assembly last session, Mr. President, we saw your commitment to women's issues. It is gratifying for us to see you presiding over this important meeting today. These meetings of the Council are the result of the efforts of numerous women and their organizations, which have been demanding for some time now that the Council formally take up the matter. Today, we pay a tribute to their dedication and hard work in making it happen.

We thank Secretary-General Kofi Annan for the important statement he made this morning, in which he highlighted areas that need attention from the Security Council. We also acknowledge the contributions of the two women who addressed the Council this morning. Ms. Angela King and Ms. Noeleen Heyzer have played a great role in making women's issues matter in the United Nations, and no doubt they will continue their important work.

Bangladesh is fully committed to realizing the potential of women in promoting peace. We feel proud to have, in our Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, a woman leader of great vision and courage who is actively contributing to peace at the national level as well as globally, spearheading the culture of peace and non-violence.

Bangladesh is proud to have had the privilege of taking a pioneering step in the Security Council when it presided over the Council's first-ever pronouncement on women, armed conflict and peace on 8 March this year, International Women's Day. In that statement, the Council members recognized that peace is inextricably

linked with equality between men and women and affirmed that women's equal access to and equal participation in power structures and their full involvement in the prevention and resolution of conflict are essential for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.

Our work in the Security Council on this issue must be set in the broader context of the commitments of the Beijing process, both the 1995 Conference and the 2000 review, which show us the way forward. The Council's decisions affect women in situations of armed conflict. It is therefore only appropriate that those decisions be made keeping women squarely in the picture.

We believe that the Council has to take into account three broad areas. The first is the impact of conflict on women and girls. As the nature of conflict shifts in a post-cold-war, globalized world, civilians, in particular women and children, are increasingly victims. Women and girls form the majority of refugees and internally displaced persons. They are in particular danger of being harmed and abused and of facing gender-based and other, unimaginable, gross human rights violations.

As a participant in the Council mission to Sierra Leone, I have seen at first hand the ravages of war on women in that country. The Security Council must demand of all parties to armed conflict that they comply fully with international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls, and take special measures in this regard. To respond to their needs, all United Nations peace operations must include a gender unit. The human rights components of peace operations should include women's rights in all their documents and reports.

At the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration sites, the different needs of women and men combatants and accompanying family members must be addressed. The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court recognized war crimes against girls and women. The Security Council must add its voice in ensuring that there is no impunity for gender-based war crimes.

The second area is the involvement of women in the peace process. From Burundi to Somalia, and from Northern Ireland to the Middle East and Cambodia, women have shown a great capacity as peacemakers. They have assumed an activist role while holding together their families and communities. At the grass-roots and community levels, women have organized to resist militarization, to create space for dialogue and moderation and to weave together the shattered fabric of societies.

We must ensure that women get more avenues to promote peace, not only at the local level, but also at the national, regional and global levels. By bringing their experience to the peace table, women can inject into the peace process a practical understanding of the various challenges faced by civilian populations. The mechanisms that come out of such involvement are naturally more sensitive to the needs of civilians and therefore more sustainable and useful.

Women also have a great role to play in promoting in strife-torn societies a culture of peace, which lies at the root of lasting peace and reconciliation. Unless there is a culture of peace, with women at its helm, long-term solutions will elude us.

I come finally to United Nations peace operations and women. At the decision-making level and on the ground there has to be more representation of women. There has been a demand for more women special representatives of the Secretary-General. We welcome that. At the same time, we have to be careful to avoid tokenism. We should go not only for visibility in the representation of women, but for representation that is wider and more effective.

Bangladesh has begun to send its women to peace operations, with the first five civilian police deployed in East Timor. The armed forces in Bangladesh have recently opened their doors to women and will soon be having women in command positions. As a country that has contributed over the years to the most difficult United Nations missions, we shall be doing our part by sending more women peacekeepers in future.

One area where the United Nations and its Member States must act urgently is in improving the training of peacekeeping personnel by fully gender-sensitizing them. The peacekeepers must never violate the trust the civilian populations place in them and can have no impunity for their actions.

We believe that it is an opportune moment for the United Nations, and in particular the Security Council, to do much more than it has done so far in promoting women's issues in peacekeeping. The Brahimi Panel's report (S/2000/809) is under active consideration. We

have already welcomed its useful recommendations. We noted, however, that a gender dimension of peacekeeping and peace support operations must be highlighted; it is a missing link as far as the report is concerned.

We support the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on "Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations". We believe that the actions identified in the Declaration can complement and fill in the blanks in the recommendations of the Brahimi Panel's report.

As I have said, the women have spoken. They have made it clear that they are willing to shoulder their responsibilities and take charge of their lives and peace in their societies. The Council in particular, and the United Nations at large, has to respond through concrete actions.

The President: I thank the representative of Bangladesh for his kind words addressed to my country, to me and to the Namibian delegation.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) *(spoke in Russian)*: I associate myself with my colleagues in expressing pleasure that today you, Sir, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Namibia, are presiding over this meeting of the Security Council. I would also like to thank the entire delegation of Namibia for their work in the presidency during October.

We very much appreciate the contribution made by your country, Mr. President, in promoting the noble aims of advancing the status of women. We are also grateful to Ms. Angela King and Ms. Heyzer for their statements, and particularly for the specific ideas that I am sure will be very useful in the practical work of the appropriate United Nations bodies and the Secretariat.

The words "Women", "peace" and "security" combine harmoniously, because this harmony is predetermined by nature. However, while we have selected these three words for our agenda, we are today compelled to talk about other concepts, too, the combination of which is unnatural and yet occurs all too often in today's world: women and war, women and armed conflict.

The Security Council's mandate includes its central role in the maintenance of international peace and security. A resolve to strengthen this central role was forcefully proclaimed recently by our heads of State in the Declaration unanimously adopted at the summit meeting of the Security Council. The Council's involvement in resolving a multitude of armed conflicts in various parts of the world gives us the difficult task of giving due attention to all aspects of crisis situations which pose a threat to international peace and security. In the context of discharging its primary Charter obligation, in recent years the Council has held a number of open debates and adopted some important resolutions on the protection of children, civilians and humanitarian personnel in armed conflict, and on the problems of post-conflict peace-building.

We must say that armed conflicts, wars of aggression and terrorist acts cause enormous suffering to women. They die because they find themselves in a zone of hostilities; they lose husbands, brothers, fathers and sons in war, and, lacking breadwinners, bear the full brunt of economic problems; and they fall victim to violence and wander around from one refugee camp to another. They need a sensitive approach and reliable protection.

But women, as has already been said today, are not merely helpless victims. They are an enormous strength and can provide invaluable assistance in reconciling belligerents and tending the wounds of war.

Women's peace-making potential is just starting to become a reality, and we hope that its further development will be promoted by today's discussion in the Security Council. We cannot say that so far the international community has turned a deaf ear to these problems. Recommendations and gender mainstreaming initiatives in the context of the application of international norms in the area of human rights and humanitarian law, initiatives to involve women in peace-making and peace-building, have been broadly reflected in the Beijing Platform for Action, in the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action and in the agreed recommendations on women and armed conflict of the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-fourth session.

Inescapable punishment for sexual violence against women in armed conflicts, whoever might be the perpetrator, must be meted out by the International Criminal Court. We are convinced that this body will dovetail harmoniously with the existing system for the maintenance of international peace and security — with a key role being played by the Security Council — by supplementing national judicial systems in cases when they turn out to be ineffectual. When Russia

signed the Statute of the International Criminal Court on 13 September, we demonstrated our resolve, together with other countries, to try to end impunity for, inter alia, crimes against women.

The problem of women in armed conflict was also highlighted in the special session of the General Assembly held in June entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century". The comprehensive nature of the outcome document of the special session convincingly shows that resolving humanity's challenges in all areas without the full participation of women is impossible. This applies to the important role that could, and should be played by women in eliminating and preventing crisis situations, in the proper rearing of the younger generation, in developing a culture of peace and in the dialogue among civilizations.

There is no more reliable way to protect women from the horrors of war than eliminating conflicts from people's lives. This was the thrust of Russia's proposal to strengthen strategic stability, which calls for unity of action by the international community in the military, political, soci.-economic, human rights and environmental-protection areas. As Russian President Putin stressed in his statement at the Security Council Summit on 7 September, in order to improve the crisis-prevention capability of the United Nations it is particularly important to uncover the underlying causes of conflicts, including economic and social causes, to develop a culture of crisis prevention and to focus more on anticipating events. This is the direct responsibility of the Security Council.

In trying to find answers to the severe challenges of our times, the Council should heed more closely women's voices and in its decisions pay closer attention to the gender perspective. We hope that such an approach will promote more effective protection of the rights of women and help in the attainment of the main goal: the creation of lasting peace on our Earth, so that nevermore the words "women" and "war", and "women" and "suffering" go together.

The President: I thank the representative of the Russian Federation for his kind words addressed to my country, the Namibian delegation and to me.

Mr. Hamer (Netherlands): First of all I want to join others in congratulating you, Sir, and your delegation for your initiative in organizing today's important and timely meeting. We welcome the increased attention of the United Nations to the position of women in situations of conflict. Women and children constitute a disproportionate number of the civilians affected by armed conflict. This open debate, taking place on the fifty-fifth United Nations Day, is an important step in focusing attention on women victims of conflicts and in getting women more actively involved in conflict prevention and conflict resolution, as well as peace-building.

The representative of France will make a statement on behalf of the European Union to which my delegation fully subscribes. I will therefore limit myself to a few observations on the issue of women and peace and security.

We were briefed today by Assistant Secretary-General King and by Ms. Heyzer of United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) on the special needs of women in conflict situations and on the important contributions they can make to peace and security. I was struck in particular by Ms. Heyzer's important analysis of the way the Security Council can involve these women. For instance, she made the points that the security of women is the best indicator of the security of a nation, and that an early-warning system must take women's voices into account. Ms. Heyzer's lucid comments underscore once again the critical input that others can give — and, in the Council's own interest, should be encouraged to give — to improve the functioning of the Security Council.

Ms. Heyzer's comments also underscore the importance of yesterday's Arria formula meeting, chaired by Ambassador Durrant, with some key non-governmental organizations active in this field. These non-governmental organizations play an essential role in ensuring that the Security Council receives the information it needs to allow women to play their important role in peacemaking.

The Netherlands has been working actively with these organizations to increase the involvement of women in peace-building activities. In Sudan and in Israel and the Palestinian territories, the Netherlands has supported women's organizations taking a more active part in conflict resolution and peace-building. We have also supported UNIFEM in the work it has undertaken in this regard — work that was referred to by Ms. Heyzer today.

A peace agreement in which half the population plays no part has little chance of success. We would

welcome more of such joint efforts to increase women's involvement in peace-building activities, and we are ready to share with others the lessons learned from the activities undertaken.

The twenty-third special session of the General Assembly encouraged the United Nations system to involve women in peacekeeping and peace-building activities, for instance by appointing more women as special envoys or special representatives of the Secretary-General. A gender perspective should be included in all policies and programmes addressing armed conflicts — not only within the United Nations system, but also in regional organizations involved in issues of peace and security, such as the Organization of African Unity, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development. In this regard, the Netherlands has decided to fund a gender adviser for the OSCE. We hope that with the necessary political support such gender advisers can help to mainstream a gender perspective in peace and security matters.

A landmark breakthrough in the protection of women in armed conflicts was of course the inclusion of the issue of gender-based violence in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization and other forms of sexual violence are war crimes when committed in the context of armed conflict, and under defined circumstances they constitute crimes against humanity. We have to aim at preventing such gender-based violence, take measures to support the prosecution of all persons responsible for such crimes, provide victims avenues for redress and increase awareness of the extent to which such crimes are used as weapons of war. Above all, the message must be that there can be no impunity for perpetrators of sexual violence against women.

Refugees and internally displaced persons are likely to suffer most in times of armed conflict. In such situations women, children and the elderly are most vulnerable. In its emergency aid programmes the Netherlands pays particular attention, therefore, to the needs of women refugees, focusing, for instance, on the issue of reproductive rights. We have supported projects of the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund and the non-governmental organization CARE in Sudan and Somalia.

We must not forget that women and children are particularly vulnerable in post-conflict situations. As they go out to the fields in search of food and firewood they are at risk of becoming victims of landmines, for instance. When setting up mine-awareness campaigns, it is therefore essential that particular attention be paid to women and children.

To conclude, we believe that this Security Council debate constitutes an important step in the protection of women in armed conflict and in realizing their potential as an important part of the solution. In the follow-up to this debate the Council should further consider concrete ways and means of protecting the human rights of women during armed conflicts and of ensuring adequate participation and representation of women in peacekeeping activities. The draft resolution presented to the Council seems to us the right way forward.

The President: I thank the representative of the Netherlands for his kind words addressed to me and my delegation.

Mr. Heinbecker (Canada) (*spoke in French*): First of all, we would like to congratulate you, Sir, for taking the initiative of holding a thematic debate on this important subject. Until recently, the role of women in peace and security has been virtually absent from the Council's discussions.

I also would like to express the appreciation of the Government of Canada to the Secretary-General for his ongoing efforts to integrate a gender perspective into the work of the United Nations. I would also like to say how much we appreciate the participation today by Assistant Secretary-General Angela King. Ms. King, we hope that your presence here will become a more regular occurrence. Finally, we are also very pleased to welcome to the Council Ms. Noeleen Heyser, Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

(*spoke in English*)

The subject of today's meeting is an important element of the Security Council's ongoing work on the protection of civilians in situations of armed conflict. Canada advanced this theme as a central component of its Council membership because of the disproportionate toll contemporary armed conflict takes on civilians — the majority of these being women and children. As the Secretary-General himself noted a little earlier, modern

conflict no longer respects the line between the military and the civilian. Civilians — particularly woman and children — are not the incidental casualties of war; they are now the specific and deliberate targets. This was also a theme of the recently concluded first International Conference on War-affected Children, which was hosted by Canada in Winnipeg last month.

War does have differentiated impacts on men and women and on boys and girls, and it is good that this is finally being recognized. With resolutions 1265 (1999) and 1296 (2000) on the protection of civilians, resolutions 1261 (1999) and 1314 (2000) on children and armed conflict, and the press statement made by the Council President earlier this year on International Women's Day, the Security Council has begun to make progress in acknowledging these differentials.

We increasingly recognize the need to craft gender-sensitive measures to ensure that women and men alike benefit fully from efforts to build peace, but we need to go further. We must also ensure that our focus is not restricted to issues of the victimization of women, vital as it is to grapple with them. We must address ourselves as well to the positive contribution that women — irrespective of their age, class, ethnicity, race or any other status — can and do make to conflict prevention and to post-conflict peace-building.

In resolution 1265 (1999), the Security Council requested the Secretary-General to ensure that United Nations peace support personnel have appropriate training, including in gender-related issues. As my colleague from the United Kingdom noted earlier, in support of this effort, the Governments of Canada and the United Kingdom have developed gender training material for military and civilian personnel. By seeking to heighten gender sensitivity across a range of issues, from mine-action programming to the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the drafting of new laws and constitutions, this practical initiative complements normative efforts to ensure equitable representation of women in peace support operations, codes of conduct and so on. This initiative gives guidance on how to respond to the different experiences and needs of women in armed conflict, including respect for and promotion of women's human rights. Canada looks forward to working with other Member States in advancing this work.

Peace support operations need new skills, new attitudes and new ways of working to create the environment in which such training finds fertile ground. The deployment of women in the field — including as peacekeeping and civilian police personnel, and as special representatives of the Secretary-General and special envoys, as a number of us have said — will deliver such innovative thinking and methods of work.

Missions should also include experts to serve as focal points on gender issues or, where possible, be equipped with full units to ensure that gender perspectives are integrated into mission activities. Gender considerations must likewise be central to decisions about the design and delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Women and girls are profoundly affected by conflict, whether they be caught up in its midst, in flight or in camps, dealing with its aftermath or reconstructing homes and societies. Conflict routinely imposes new burdens and changes women's roles, as Executive Director Heyzer said so eloquently.

Women also experience personal insecurity differently than men. For example, women in refugee camps are more vulnerable to violence if the camps are not designed with their particular needs in mind, as was so graphically evident in that powerful video we saw at the beginning of this meeting. Gender-sensitive humanitarian assistance can mitigate the different and negative effects conflicts have on women, especially when it takes into account changes wrought by crises, for example by recognizing new responsibilities of women as heads of households.

We welcome recent initiatives, such as the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's policy statement for the integration of a gender perspective in humanitarian assistance, the International Committee of the Red Cross's project on women and war, and the decision to mainstream a gender perspective into the Sphere standards. We look forward to the implementation of recent initiatives in this area, in particular with respect to the field and at headquarters, and to their evaluation. More globally, important steps are being taken to address human rights and humanitarian law violations, including women's human rights, and to end the culture of impunity.

The Statutes of the International Criminal Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, both

of which list rape as a crime against humanity, establish key precedents. In addition, the Rwanda Tribunal listed rape as a war crime in internal armed conflict and its first decision was precedent-setting, as it recognized rape as a tool of genocide.

The International Criminal Court will be a particularly important new tool for addressing abuses against women, having as it does a mandate to prosecute not only rape, but also sexual slavery, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization and persecution on the basis of gender. In addition, the Court's staff will include judges with expertise in violence against women. I am pleased to announce that Canadian legislation to allow for the full implementation of the Rome Statute came into effect yesterday. We urge others that have not done so to sign and ratify the Statute so that this new instrument can come into force as soon as possible.

The continuing work of civil society on the issue of women and peace and security deserves special attention. Earlier this year, Canada and Norway commissioned Mrs. Graça Machel to conduct a comprehensive review of her study on children. In *the Machel Review 1996-2000*, she makes a poignant call for more protection for women and girls. We echo the support expressed by others around the table for a study of the impact on armed conflict on women.

As Ambassador Durrant and others have mentioned, yesterday we benefited from a very useful exchange of ideas with leading women's organizations. The Security Council should continue to collaborate with such organizations, whose work on the ground contributes directly to protecting women, promoting their human rights and providing for their active participation in peace processes.

Any attempt to rebuild democracy and governance in the wake of violent conflict must include gender considerations. Women's full and free participation at all levels in all phases, from relief to development, must be promoted. Without it, the long-term sustainability of peace settlements will suffer because vital voices will not have been heard; opportunities for the constructive participation of women will have been lost; and 50 per cent of the talent available for that task will have been squandered.

In Burundi, Canada financed the participation of women in the early stages of the peace process. We warmly welcomed UNIFEM's efforts as well to sustain women's participation in spite of the resistance to it by some. While this was an improvement, it was not enough. Women's participation is vital at the pre-negotiation, negotiation and implementation phases. Let us heed the request of Burundian women that they be fully involved in the implementation of the peace agreement, at all levels in all post-conflict institutions.

Canada believes that gender perspectives should be integral elements of the Security Council's work, including in the future reporting to the Council on the protection of civilians in armed conflict. As we proceed with the implementation of the Brahimi report on United Nations peace operations, we should also ensure that gender perspectives are fully integrated. In addition, Canada is pleased that the Lessons Learned Unit of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has completed its report on gender and peacekeeping. As Ms. King rightly and wryly observed, we hope that we are really going to learn the lessons of the lessons learned exercise. We strongly encourage the Security Council to consider doing so. We draw particular attention to recommendations on monitoring, evaluation and accountability.

(*spoke in French*)

The issue of women and peace and security requires the Security Council's sustained attention. The Security Council has all the authority and tools necessary to make a difference. Other interlocutors within and outside the United Nations system will be vital to this endeavour and must be engaged. Canada is committed to working with others who share this interest to advance this agenda and ensure the full mainstreaming of women in the pursuit of peace and security.

The President: I thank the representative of Canada for his kind words addressed to my delegation and to me.

Mr. Levitte (France) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries, Cyprus and Malta, align themselves with this statement.

Allow me to thank you, Sir, on behalf of the European Union, for having inscribed on our agenda

the theme of women and peace and security. The Security Council's interest in the specific situation of women is recent. The Council paid tribute to their special role on 8 March 2000 on the occasion of International Women's Day, on the initiative of the President at the time, the Ambassador of Bangladesh. This debate logically follows from the interest accorded in the protection of civilians in armed conflict and the competence of the Council regarding peace and security.

Our work should not disregard those involved elsewhere in the United Nations. The question of women in conflict was one of the 12 action areas of the Beijing Platform for Action, and the follow-up special session of the General Assembly held in June 2000, which rightly included "peace" in its title, took up and strengthened the recommendations on this topic. The role of women in all situations, I have no doubt, will be taken into account by the Security Council.

My first comment is that when we deal with conflict the role of women seems to be basically passive. Women are generally mentioned only as victims. To the extent that it is civilians that suffer most from conflicts, women represent a high percentage of the victims. It is therefore important that peacekeeping forces be sensitized and trained to bear in mind in their missions women's specific protection needs. In recent years particular attention has been paid to the use of sexual violence as a method of warfare. These acts of aggression basically target women, who are sometimes the victims of systematic rape and gender-based acts of aggression. These acts must not go unpunished.

In this regard, the European Union is happy that the International Criminal Court describes as war crimes, and in specific circumstances crimes against humanity, acts of sexual violence committed in times of conflict. It appeals to all States to sign or ratify the Statute of the International Criminal Court and to incorporate its principles into their national legislation.

Women also constitute a high proportion of refugees and displaced persons, which makes them extremely vulnerable. The European Union is concerned about the development of trafficking in persons in conflict situations. We welcome the progress towards the adoption of the draft Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its protocols, particularly that relating to trafficking in persons. We appeal for the speedy conclusion of this work.

Ending violence is a twofold challenge: on the one hand, the duty to see justice done, and, on the other, the need for reconciliation. Women have often played a decisive role in this area, particularly in Africa — I am thinking of Burundi, for example — and Latin America. We all recall the example of the Plaza de Mayo grandmothers, who ensured that the memory of the disappeared would not sink into oblivion.

This example also shows us — and this brings me to my second comment — that women are not just victims in conflict situations; they can play an essential role in conflict resolution and in rebuilding. While still under-represented in decision-making positions, women have started to participate actively in conflict resolution, in peacekeeping, in defence and in foreign affairs. It is important to create the conditions in which more of them can become stakeholders.

Within the competent bodies of the United Nations, it is taken for granted that women must be able to be heard and to have access to decision-making positions. We must increasingly appoint women with the necessary experience and competence to the posts of special representatives or envoys. Here we have a reservoir of human resources that the United Nations does not use to the fullest.

The Brahimi report (S/2000/809) gives an opportunity for an in-depth discussion of integrated strategies for conflict prevention and peace-building. It would appear that the role of women has not been mainstreamed, including in the recommendations on the training of United Nations field staff. The new importance assigned to the civilian aspects of peacekeeping operations should enable women to participate more fully. A balanced composition of teams should be sought to allow women to use their widely recognized ability to make contact with local communities and share in the realities of their daily life. We hope that this question will be taken into consideration in the follow-up to this report.

In their own countries, women must be encouraged to participate in reconciliation and rebuilding; it is something they already do. We should also study ways to better involve civil society, particularly women's organizations, in areas vital to reconstruction, such as justice. It is also essential to

maintain basic social services, particularly for women and children, in post-conflict situations.

Social cohesion, which is necessary to stabilize States emerging from conflict situations or threatened by them, is promoted by equality between men and women and respect for their rights. Rebuilding a country's democratic institutions and its political and public life must involve the participation of women in the decision-making process, because of the need for gender equality. In this regard, the European Union welcomes the initiatives taken by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and, within the Stability Pact for the Balkans, the establishment of a working group which has drawn up a plan of action for gender equality.

The European Union also stresses that this question figures prominently in the Declaration adopted at the Millennium Summit, which we must implement for the benefit of the peoples concerned.

The President: I thank the representative of France for his kind words addressed to the Namibian delegation.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): My delegation would like to express its appreciation to you, Mr. President, and your delegation for convening this open meeting of the Council on this important subject.

We also commend Namibia for its constructive role in highlighting this subject, particularly in the context of the Namibia Plan of Action on "Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations". Given the involvement of women in the twin issues of peace and security, the Council's consideration of the subject today is not only pertinent, but timely.

We would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his introductory remarks and also take this opportunity to thank Assistant Secretary-General, Ms. Angela King, the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, and Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, the Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) for their important contributions. Their presentations were rich both with ideas and proposals and with passion and commitment.

The Council has clearly acknowledged in several of its resolutions and Presidential Statements the harmful impact of conflict on women and children and the grave implications of this, not only for peace and security but also for socio-economic development. Perhaps more than any other organ of the United Nations, the Council is mindful of the fact that nearly all of today's conflicts occur within national boundaries, and that over 80 per cent of the victims are civilians, mainly women and their children. In many conflict situations, they are the most vulnerable members of the population, often targeted with impunity, but also often the most neglected.

Previous speakers have underscored the importance of the Beijing Conference on Women in highlighting the plight of women, particularly in conflict situations. I will therefore not repeat what has already been said other than to stress the importance of the Beijing Platform for Action and the need for sustained follow-up actions, particularly in the context of women in situations of armed conflict.

Numerous reports have suggested that gender-based abuses are not just an accident of war, nor incidental adjuncts to armed conflict. Rather, these forms of persecution reflect the inequalities and indignities that women face in their everyday lives, even in peacetime. The Special Rapporteur on violence against women has suggested that gender-based crimes, such as rape in situations of armed conflict, are not just sexual but aggressive acts, because of the humiliation and helplessness inflicted on the victims. The abuses are used as instruments to punish, intimidate, coerce, humiliate and degrade. They are inflicted both to cause physical hurt to the victims as well as to humiliate a community, an ethnic group or an enemy nation.

Events in conflict situations, such as in Kosovo, Rwanda and Sierra Leone, have highlighted the excesses that occurred, especially those affecting women, in time of war. It is a matter of serious concern that the same kind of atrocities take place all over the world, wherever there is armed conflict, and that in those situations, women and children are subjected to grave violations of their human rights.

Owing to massive population dislocations in conflict situations, women often become separated from their children. Some have been forcefully conscripted as combatants, while others have been tortured, maimed, raped, or had their limbs amputated. They have been subjected to other unspeakable crimes, crimes against humanity. Most of these women become highly traumatized because of the atrocities to which they have been subjected or that they have witnessed.

In spite of all this, they try to cope with their scars — real and psychological. Overnight they become heads of households and have to take care of orphans, the disabled and the aged. Most of them continue to shoulder this burden while residing in displaced persons and refugee camps with very meagre means for survival.

In times of conflict, women play a significant role in maintaining order in the family and society. Yet their contributions as peace educators within the family and their communities go unrecognized. Women are hardly ever considered to be an integral and essential element in political decisions, conflict resolution, peace-building and peace processes.

Despite the important perspectives women have with regard to conflict situations, peacemaking and peacekeeping, they are under-represented in decision-making positions at all levels. They are still significantly under-represented in positions of political decision-making and are unlikely to be involved in decisions concerning State security. In some conflict situations, such as in Sierra Leone, for instance, some women who had worked with the rebels, in time came to realize, often through dialogue with other women, the futility of the conflict and especially their role in it, and many of them could be used as channels to bring peace. However, their role as channels of access and communication between the warring groups are often ignored in official peace-mediating initiatives. In the post-conflict phase, the emphasis on the more formal levels of establishing systems of governance through political parties frequently leaves out the role and voices of women, who, at the informal and community levels, may have much to contribute in helping define terms for peace and security.

Although the problems have been recognized, more needs to be done in terms of follow-up actions. Several remedial actions have been identified in a number of important initiatives on women, such as the Namibia Plan of Action, as well as the 1996 Machel Report and the 2000 Machel Review. Many of these have been highlighted by Ms. King and Ms. Heyzer, as well as by other previous speakers. For reasons of brevity I shall not repeat them, other than express Malaysia's support for many of them and our intent to work constructively both in the Council, as well as in other organs of the United Nations.

An increase in the number of women in decision-making positions, as well as in peacekeeping, is crucial, but this is not all that is required. Gender impact must be a central concern in all decisions and actions with regard to peace and security and also in programmes of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants.

Gender mainstreaming as the process for assessing the implications for women of any planned public action in any area, including security, peace-building, peacemaking and peacekeeping, has been endorsed by the Beijing Platform for Action, as well as by the Commission on the Status of Women. Thanks to the Namibia Plan of Action, among others, a study assessing the extent to which a gender perspective is included in all stages of peacekeeping operations is now being undertaken within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Clearly, important steps have been taken in giving substance to the role of women in peace and security. All of these measures must be followed-up and sustained. Today's meeting of the Council and the resolution that will be adopted contribute substantively to these efforts and I should like to congratulate the Namibian Presidency for the success of this debate.

May I conclude with something, which I think is most appropriate on this occasion, to acknowledge the role of women, including the two outstanding guest speakers who have addressed the Council.

I believe that Ralph Waldo Emerson said that a sufficient definition of civilization is the influence of good women. I am not sure that it was he who said this but I would like to believe that it was said by a good and reasonable man.

The President: I should like to thank the representative of Malaysia for the kind words he addressed to my delegation.

Mr. Krokhmal (Ukraine) Mr. President, my delegation warmly welcomes you as you preside over this meeting of the Security Council.

I should also like to thank you and the delegation of Namibia for organizing this open meeting and giving the Council an excellent opportunity to have a broad exchange of views and proposals aimed at finding effective ways to protect women and to ensure their full participation in efforts to maintain peace and security.

We thank the Secretary-General for his important statement this morning, as well as Ms. King, Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, and Ms. Heyzer, Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), for their contribution to our discussion.

The question before us today is a complex one. It should also be borne in mind that a number of organs within the United Nations system are addressing various aspects of this issue, and a number of specific policies and recommendations in this respect have been worked out.

We would like to particularly commend the United Nations Development Fund for Women for its efforts to ensure that women are half of every solution. We would also like to underscore the important contribution of non-United Nations bodies and humanitarian agencies, as well as non-governmental organizations, in protecting women in armed conflicts and providing them humanitarian assistance and other necessary relief. The Security Council should provide its own perspective on the question of women's protection and women's role in the maintenance of peace and security, in accordance with its own mandate.

International resolve to safeguard women's rights in conflict situations has substantially strengthened in recent years. In response to the increased targeting of women and other civilians that has become a shameful instrument of contemporary warfare, the international community has further developed, in addition to the Fourth Geneva Convention and the two Additional Protocols of 1977, a body of law dealing with crimes against civilian populations, with special emphasis on the protection of women. The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court incorporates gender-based prosecution within its jurisdiction and lists rape, enforced prostitution and other forms of sexual violence as war crimes and crimes against humanity. The ad hoc Tribunal for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia both explicitly incorporate rape as a crime against humanity within their jurisdiction. The statute of the Rwanda Tribunal also expressly includes rape, enforced prostitution and any form of indecent assault as a violation of article 3 of the Fourth Geneva Convention and a breach of Additional Protocol II.

Apart from that, the Security Council has adopted several resolutions on the protection of children and civilians in armed conflict wherein it urged all parties to take special measures to protect women and girls from rape and other forms of gender-based violence.

However, in spite all international efforts, women continue to be the most vulnerable victims of armed conflicts. With a rapid proliferation of inter-State wars and other hostilities, civilians increasingly represent the overwhelming majority of war victims, with women and girls targeted for the most brutal forms of attack, including rape, sexual mutilation, sexually humiliating treatment and forcible impregnation. Sexual violence brings with it the risk of HIV/AIDS. The increase in inter-State and inter-ethnic hostilities in the last decade and the increased number of refugees became a catalyst for a major explosion in the spread of the disease, and it has yet to show up statistically. In addition to that, women also experience the trauma of losing relatives and friends in times of armed conflict and of having to take responsibility for the care of surviving family members. They also constitute the majority of refugees and displaced persons.

My country is greatly concerned about this situation and strongly condemns the targeting of women in situations of armed conflict. In this context, I would like to stress that the Security Council should give special consideration to the particular needs of women affected by armed conflict when considering action aimed at promoting peace and security.

It is important that the Secretary-General's reports to the Council dealing with specific conflict situations and developments in the field also incorporate gender perspectives in addressing various aspects of conflict analysis and conflict resolution. I share the view expressed by previous speakers that the Council should also request the Secretary-General to ensure that personnel involved in United Nations peacekeeping and peace-building operations have appropriate training on the protection, rights and particular needs of women. Security Council resolutions setting up or extending peacekeeping operations should provide a clear mandate to address the protection of women and girls affected by conflict against all sexual violence, abduction, enforced prostitution, trafficking and threats imposed by military, paramilitary and other groups.

We believe the Security Council has a special responsibility to support women's participation in

peace processes by ensuring respective gender balance in United Nations peacekeeping missions. The Council has already recognized, through the statement of its President on the occasion of International Women's Day, the important role of women in conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peace-building and has underscored the importance of promoting an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes when addressing armed or other conflicts.

My delegation heartily applauds the efforts and dedication of all women serving United Nations peacekeeping and humanitarian missions under very difficult and quite frequently dangerous circumstances in conflict and post-conflict areas. The presence of women in United Nations missions can foster confidence and trust among the local population, critical elements in any peacekeeping mission. In performing their tasks, women are perceived to be compassionate, unwilling to opt for force over reconciliation, willing to listen and learn and are widely seen as contributors to an environment of stability and morality that fosters the progress of peace.

At the same time, women are still under-represented in decision-making with regard to conflict. Their initiatives and visions for peace and security are rarely heard of during peace negotiations. In this regard, I would like to stress that women should not be viewed primarily as victims of armed conflict; the international community should use the potential of women as agents of preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping and peace-building. The peace-building initiatives of women in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, Cambodia, Rwanda, Mozambique and Guatemala indicate how precious their contribution to peace can be.

Being an active participant of the United Nations peacekeeping and peacemaking efforts, Ukraine has also contributed women civilian police to United Nations peacekeeping missions. We reiterate our readiness to continue working constructively with other Members States in order to ensure the protection of women in armed conflicts and women's participation in peace processes. We are confident that further development of peacekeeping and peace-building teams, with women and men as equal partners, would improve the efficiency of peacekeeping and peace maintenance throughout the world.

The delegation of Ukraine looks forward to a positive outcome of this important initiative on the women and peace and security. We hope that many useful ideas put forward by many delegations at this meeting will be incorporated in the respective Security Council draft resolution.

The President: I thank the representative of Ukraine for his kind words addressed to me and my delegation.

Mr. Kassé (Mali) (*spoke in French*): Allow me to express my delegation's satisfaction at seeing you preside over this important meeting, Mr. Minister, and at your having taken this initiative. We also wish to thank, through you, the Secretary-General; Mrs. Angela King, the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women; Mrs. Noleen Heyzer, Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM); and the delegation of Namibia to the Security Council, led by Ambassador Andjaba. We also thank all those who are present today.

Peace is our first objective, and it is undeniably here, in the Security Council, that peace must be ensured. But allow me to add that without women, it is difficult to ensure peace.

The women of Mali did not wait for the Republic of Mali to achieve national sovereignty to become involved in the prevention, settlement and management of conflict. In traditional society, conflict resolution was a collective effort, and the sacrifices that had to be made were in the interest of the entire community. Thus, women played a very important, endogenous role.

In conflicts between communities, it is not unusual for warring communities to resort to marriage to restore peace. That makes it possible to seal a pact of friendship, solidarity or cooperation.

Similarly, women have always been considered a part of the entire community and of the family, and not just the wife of a single individual. Allied societies submit to the rules of marriage to avoid breaking the social relationship established through the link of marriage. Declared conflicts between communities linked by marriages are generally quelled by the intervention of women, through whom that matrimonial linkage is established.

African women have always contributed to facilitating and supporting as a matter of priority the intermingling of tribes and the strengthening of unity through the bonds of matrimony, as they are the strongest links in the chain of solidarity, fraternity and harmony. However, we must now recognize that individualism, which was formerly proscribed, has gained ground on these values to such an extent that it has led to internal conflict. Africa has thus entered the most troubling period of its history.

Mali has not been able to escape that scourge. In 1990 a Tuareg rebellion broke out in the north of the country. As in other parts of the world, women do not usually decide to go to war and they do not wage it. Nevertheless, they suffer tremendously as a result of wars and lose those dearest to them — fathers, husbands and sons — and even lose their honour and their dignity. Aware of this fact, the women of Mali decided they would manage not only atrocities and their devastating consequences, but that they would also participate actively in preserving peace and national unity. This conscious decision involved women in the search for peaceful solutions to the crisis that shook northern Mali and had various effects.

Those effects included appeals to mobilize for peace; the development and implementation of a plan of action and information campaign for peace; the national mobilization of women around slogans calling for peace and reconciliation; the mobilization of resources for peace; the involvement of women in the prevention and management of conflict and in the consolidation of peace; humanitarian activities focused on civilian victims; participation in preliminary negotiations for the restoration of peace; and, finally, participation in negotiating and finalizing the National Peace Pact, which brought peace back to northern Mali. With the restoration of peace, the women of Mali continue their struggle, together with the rest of civil society, to consolidate peace, and extend a hand to all other women in countries undergoing crisis.

The women of Mali remain convinced that in order to ensure the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations — which today have progressed from traditional peacekeeping operations to multidimensional activities in support of peace — the principles of gender equity and equality must find a place in all missions, at all levels, in order to guarantee men and women the same role in every element of the peace process: peacekeeping, reconciliation and peace-building. In this connection, we firmly support the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations, which was adopted at Windhoek on 31 May 2000.

During the Security Council Summit of 7 September 2000, the President of the Republic of Mali, who presided over the Council, welcomed the Secretary-General's initiative by declaring that the report submitted by Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi is a milestone in the process that will make the United Nations "a truly credible force for peace." (*S/PV.4194, p. 20*)

At a time when mankind must more than ever before be the measure of the new millennium, and when people expect the United Nations to be the promoter and guarantor of a world of progress for all — a world of peace, solidarity and sharing — the Security Council must demonstrate a clear and discernible capacity for action that both deters and reassures. To achieve that capacity we must fully integrate women as never before as partners and beneficiaries in all aspects of a peace process: peacekeeping, reconciliation and peace-building.

Mali is studying with great interest the recommendations that have been made with regard to the topic under consideration, and will actively and positively participate in the negotiations on the relevant draft resolution.

The President: I thank the representative of Mali for his kind words addressed to the Namibian delegation.

There are a number of speakers remaining on my list. With the concurrence of the members of the Council, I intend to suspend the meeting now.

The meeting was suspended at 1.30 p.m.

Security Council

Fifty-fifth year

Provisional

4208th meeting

Tuesday, 24 October 2000, 3.15 p.m.
New York

President	Mr. Gurirab	(Namibia)
Members	Argentina	Mr. Listre
	Bangladesh	Mr. Chowdhury
	Canada	Mr. Heinbecker
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Malaysia	Mr. Hasmy
	Mali	Mr. Kassé
	Netherlands	Mr. Hamer
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Tunisia	Mr. Ben Mustapha
	Ukraine	Mr. Krokhmal
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Grainger
	United States of America	Ms. Soderberg

Agenda

Women and peace and security.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

00-70601 (E)

The meeting was resumed at 3.15 p.m.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Mozambique, Mr. Hipólito Patrício. On behalf of the Council, I welcome him. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Patrício (Mozambique): It gives me great pleasure to join previous speakers in congratulating Namibia on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council and for the brilliant manner in which you, Mr. Minister, and your able Permanent Representative are conducting the work of the Security Council during the month of October.

I wish to commend your initiative to convene this open debate on "Women and peace and security" on this very important day — United Nations Day. This debate is certainly an excellent occasion for us to once again join efforts and exchange views on the search for appropriate and concerted actions. It is also an opportunity to delineate adequate follow-up procedures to implement the decisions taken and the recommendations made during the Millennium Summit and the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", with a view to ensuring the more active participation of women in the promotion of peace and security worldwide.

Peace and security will continue to be the major concern of humanity in the new millennium, as conflicts continue to grow and devastate many parts of the world. Women and girls are vulnerable both in time of peace and in time of war, due to the profound gender inequalities that still characterize our societies. It is estimated that 80 per cent of internally displaced persons and refugees are women and children. Women and girls are also victims of rape, domestic violence, sexual exploitation, trafficking, sexual humiliation and mutilation.

The reversal of this situation requires from all of us great political will and determination to fulfil our commitments with regard to all decisions and recommendations relating to the protection and promotion of the rights of women.

As stated by our heads of State and Government, assembled here at the Millennium Summit,

> "No individual and no nation must be denied the opportunity to benefit from development. The equal rights and opportunities of women and men must be assured". *(A/RES/55/2, para. 6)*

Against this background, women must play a role of relevance in conflict prevention, the resolution of disputes, peacekeeping, post-conflict peace-building and the reconstruction process, and development.

In this regard, my delegation appreciates the dedication shown by United Nations bodies such as the Department for Disarmament Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, which, in close collaboration with the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, are joining efforts to ensure the participation of women in the promotion of peace and security, as stated this morning by Ms. King and Ms. Heyzer. We also commend the leadership role that the Secretary-General has provided throughout the United Nations system on the advancement of women, which he reconfirmed in his statement today.

We very much appreciate the decision by the Government of Namibia to host the seminar on "Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations", organized by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. The seminar adopted the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action, documents that identify actions to be taken to ensure that a gender perspective is adopted in all multidimensional operations in support of peace.

In order to protect and promote the rights of women, including their involvement in maintaining peace and security, the Government of Mozambique adopts political, social, and economic policies which envisage gender perspectives in all spheres of activity. This is done in conformity with our Constitution and the many international legal instruments and declarations that have been incorporated into our internal laws, including the 1995 Beijing and Copenhagen Declarations.

The Government has committed itself to increasing the effectiveness of all regional and international legal instruments to which it is a party, through reviewing national legislation. Accordingly, in close cooperation with civil society, the Government has embarked on the process of reviewing national legislation aimed at incorporating into our internal laws

the main provisions contained in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and other related international and regional instruments. The Government has also been taking action to increase awareness of women's rights in Mozambican society. As part of this process, a national debate is taking place on the review of the law of the family, in which women from different social groups and religious backgrounds are actively participating in order to express and defend their rights on such matters as marriage and related issues.

To enhance the institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, the Government has established a Ministry of Women and Coordination of Social Affairs, which coordinates the activities of an operative group, including Government officials and representatives from civil society and academia, whose objective it is to supervise and enhance the implementation of policies and programmes for the advancement of women.

The participation of women in leadership and decision-making has also been encouraged by the Government. For instance, representation of women in Parliament increased from 65 to 80 between 1995 and 2000, out of a total of 250 Members of Parliament. At the executive level, the number of women increased from one minister and four vice-ministers to three ministers and five vice-ministers.

The Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund, is promoting access to education for the girl child so that women will be able to take their rightful position in society.

In the context of the implementation of the Government's Action Plan for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty, for the period 2000-2004, the role of women is being underlined as a matter of priority, with special attention being paid to women in rural areas and to women as heads of family.

Women are also accorded priority among vulnerable groups with regard to HIV infection and the impact that the HIV/AIDS epidemic is having in the country. For that reason, they deserve special attention in the context of the national response to the epidemic, a response that is being led by the Government, with the participation of various social groups, through the implementation of the National Strategic Plan to Combat HIV/AIDS. The implementation of these policies and programmes is enabling the protection of the rights of women and their participation at all levels in the national reconstruction process and in social development. In order to defend and promote their rights, Mozambican women are organizing various specialized associations, and they are also members of international women's organizations. Earlier this month they organized various rallies and marches throughout the country as part of the 2000 World Women's March. In the capital city, Maputo, thousands of women and men participated in a march that culminated in a big rally where they conveyed to His Excellency Joaquim Chissano, President of the Republic of Mozambique, their demand for the protection of women's rights and protested against domestic violence.

Durable peace and security will be obtained only if all peace-loving nations dedicate themselves to tackling the root causes of conflict in the world. One of them — for developing countries, the most urgent — is the eradication of poverty. This noble task requires the commitment of all international and national actors, including women.

In Mozambique and many other African countries, women have played, and still play, an important role in looking for urgent ways to bring about durable solutions to the conflicts still prevailing. They are always at the forefront of peace and economic development in Africa and all over the world. Women and girls need to have greater access to education, employment and social and political participation in this noble endeavour to maintain peace and security.

In the Southern African Development Community (SADC), we also develop and implement programmes that enhance women's participation in the process of economic cooperation and integration, following the guidelines of the Beijing and Copenhagen Declarations as well as of the recent Millennium Declaration. It is now time for all of us to translate commitments already made into concrete action.

In conclusion, we commend the Security Council for its initiative and urge it to continue its endeavour to ensure that all concerned refrain from human rights abuses in conflict situations — particularly abuses of women and children, as highlighted in Ms. Graça Machel's report — respect international law and promote non-violent forms of conflict resolution and a culture of peace.

The President: I thank the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mozambique for his kind words addressed to Namibia.

I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Nepal in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In accordance with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Sharma (Nepal) took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Egypt. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Aboulgheit (Egypt) *(spoke in Arabic)*: At the outset, I should like to express my delegation's deep appreciation to you, Sir, and to your sisterly country, Namibia. I also wish to emphasize Egypt's full commitment to and support for all efforts to protect and advance women, as well as to foster their participation in all fields of peacemaking.

Before touching on the subject under discussion, I should like to stress Egypt's firm position, which we have stated time and again before this Council, with regard to the need to place the protection of women and children in armed conflict in the broader context of the protection of all civilians. In this connection, I also wish to make two main points that should be taken into account when the Council deals with humanitarian issues. The first is the need for the Council to deal with these subjects in an atmosphere of full respect for the delicate balances among the main organs of the United Nations, as specified in the Charter, particularly the inherent role vested in the General Assembly, in addition to other United Nations bodies and organizations outside, whether governmental or non-governmental, whose main task is the protection of the civilian population.

The second point is the pivotal principle that implementation of international humanitarian law should not contradict the need to respect and carry out the provisions of the Charter. We welcome and support the Council's readiness to respond to cases where civilians are targeted and where humanitarian assistance is deliberately blocked. Yet this should be viewed only in line with Chapter VII of the Charter and Article 39 thereof. In cases where the Council fails to exercise its responsibilities for reasons that go beyond the topic under discussion, we should always consider the viability of benefiting from General Assembly resolution 377 (V), on Uniting for Peace, in this connection.

Last June, for the first time, the United Nations witnessed the largest international gathering — governmental and non-governmental — in five years. It was designed to emphasize political commitment towards enhancing the role of women and achieving the goals of equality, development and peace for all women of the world, through the General Assembly special session held to follow up on the implementation of the recommendations of the Fourth World Conference on Women. We, the participants in the special session, pledged to leave no stone unturned in order to elevate the status of women and to preserve their rights, stemming basically from human rights.

The international community has recognized the need to take care of women and support gender equality in order to achieve development, peace and security. When we deny women the right to justice and participation in all aspects of socio-economic, cultural and political life, we are actually delaying desired development and prosperity. We are also reducing chances for just peace throughout the world.

Egypt believes in the need for the Security Council to perform its role in solving disputes and conflicts that threaten international peace and security, in a comprehensive and integrated manner, while addressing their root causes, so that the worsening of such conflicts would not lead to further hostilities among the parties to the conflict or to horrendous humanitarian conditions, such as the displacement or eviction of populations or their fleeing to neighbouring States. Hence the derogation of the sanctity of civilians, particularly women and children, and the entry into endless vicious cycles of violence.

Violence against women constitutes a main obstacle to achieving the goals of equality, development and peace. Undoubtedly, the violations to which women are subjected when caught in the heat of armed conflict, such as murder, rape, slavery, forced

conception, torture and arbitrary detention are among the most glaring manifestations of civilizational backwardness and run counter to the simplest meaning of humanity. Consequently, Egypt calls for the pursuit of an effective policy to integrate the gender perspective within public policies and private programmes dealing with conflict and post-conflict periods, in order to enhance women's status at all times and under all conditions.

While recognizing the important role undertaken by women in preventing and settling disputes and in peace-building, we emphasize the need to adopt swiftly specific, practical measures that would encourage women's equal participation, as well as achieving equal opportunity in terms of their contribution to all activities relating to peace. This is particularly so in cases of decision-making, mediation, diplomatic negotiation and preventive negotiation.

The role of women is important in the course of armed conflict and deterioration of societies through their preservation of social order. Their role is equally important in post-conflict periods, with their resolve and efforts to foster stability, peace and development. We cannot ignore the achievements made by women in all walks of life. They have rightfully and deservedly proven themselves to be an effective and productive element, taking decisions in our societies.

Last but not least, I wish to touch upon the deteriorating situation of Palestinian women under the yoke of occupation. We give highest importance and attention to this matter in my country. Women are suffering from manifestations of violence, suppression, despotism and injustice. They also feel bereaved on account of the loss of their husbands, brothers, children — wiped out, regrettably, by the bullets of the Israeli forces, putting aside any political, international or even ethical obligations on this score.

While we are discussing today the means for protecting women in armed conflict, as well as enhancing their role and participation in post-conflict time, we cannot ignore the appeals for dignity and succour launched by Palestinian women who live under the most severe inhuman conditions, conditions troubling to the world's conscience. Hence our delegation calls upon the Security Council to discuss the conditions of women under occupation, by identifying the Israeli agents who violate the simplest rules of international law and human rights and the protection of humankind, with a view to trying them for acts of blatant injustice and unjustified violence they have perpetrated against the Palestinian people. This will prove the Council's seriousness and will foster its credibility when it tackles humanitarian matters that may threaten international peace and security. There should be no double standards in dealing with such matters in the future.

The President: I thank the representative of Egypt for his kind words addressed to Namibia.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, whom I invite to take a seat at the Council table and make his statement.

Mr. Ileka (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): My delegation is very pleased to see presiding over the Security Council the leading diplomat of a friendly country, Namibia, with which the Democratic Republic of the Congo has excellent, long-standing relations marked by mutual confidence and esteem.

I congratulate you, Mr. President, on having devoted today's meeting of the Council to the issue of women and peace and security. I also sincerely thank the Secretary-General, the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women and the Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) for their significant contributions this morning to the discussion, which is part of the momentum generated by the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century".

That special session was a unique opportunity to marshal the efforts to reaffirm and ensure implementation of the commitments made at the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995. These commitments were strengthened by the adoption of the Political Declaration and new measures and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, through which the General Assembly, as part of its effort to achieve a more just society, stressed in particular that peace is indissolubly linked to equality between women and men, as well as to development.

My delegation is pleased that during the celebration of International Women's Day, the Security

Council, in its presidential statement of 8 March 2000, stressed the complex links between peace, gender equality and the need for women to participate fully in all efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts. This recognition of women as an equal partner in the prevention of war could be considered a very significant step. However, a great deal remains to be done to recognize fully the role of women in peacekeeping and peace-building.

My delegation supports the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action, adopted last May, because they are valuable documents that should be applied, particularly in the implementation of the Brahimi report, in order to enhance effectiveness.

It is absolutely essential that initiatives aimed at resolving conflicts and consolidating peace take into consideration women's concerns, experience and perspective. My delegation dares to hope that the organs of the United Nations will be able to incorporate these concerns and work to promote increased awareness of the capacities of women, in particular those affected by armed conflicts, as well as their ability to contribute to the promotion of a gender perspective in all peace-building activities. Women must be involved in the conflict-prevention and conflict-resolution mechanisms so that they can give humankind the benefit of their ability to build consensus, resolve conflicts and build peace. There can be neither equality nor development without peace and justice.

Here I should remind the international community, through the Security Council, the principal United Nations body charged with the maintenance of international peace and security, that my country is the target of aggression by a coalition of armed forces from Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi, in flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations. This conflict, with its attendant violence, continues to create enormous movements of internally displaced persons and refugees, the vast majority of whom are women and children. One result of these exoduses is to increase considerably the poverty of the civilian population. Women and children are the main victims of this senseless, unjust war, which has done such harm to all aspects of life in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The education sector has been particularly affected. The war has prevented many Congolese from pursuing a normal education programme. However, it has been proved that for a developing country such as ours schooling allows women to preserve their health and that of their families, plan their pregnancies and participate in the political, social and economic life of their country. Therefore, to deprive women of education is to do a kind of violence to them.

Women and children have also been the object of attacks on the civilian population by the regular armies of Uganda and Rwanda during their three ruthless actions against Kisangani to expropriate the underground wealth of this region -- not only gold and diamonds, but above all niobium. Though extremely rare in the earth as a whole, this metal is found in relatively large quantities in the eastern province. It is used in some alloys to strengthen armour plating and spacecraft.

This war has destroyed all the country's efforts to rebuild and revive its economy, efforts that could in particular lift women and the whole Congolese population out of the indescribable poverty in which they now find themselves. Today close to 80 per cent of the Congolese population is living in absolute poverty.

Worse than the poverty is the inhuman and degrading ill-treatment of Congolese women by armed elements of the aggressor countries, which have made such ill-treatment a means of waging war. Women have been massacred, as they were last year, during the week of 15-22 November 1999, in Mwenga, where the *Armée patriotique rwandaise*, assisted by armed elements of the *Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie*, buried women alive, as ordered by their commander, Kasereka. Those women's crime: trying to resist the mass rape that the aggressors were getting ready to commit. Their punishment: they were bled white, their bodies coated with pepper, which was then inserted into all their bodily orifices — their eyes, their mouths, their noses, their ears and their genitals — before being thrown into a common grave.

In addition to the incident in Mwenga, many cases of violations of women's rights have been recorded and denounced in white papers issued by my Government and in various reports of the Special Rapporteur on human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mr. Garretón, the most recent of which revealed many cases of imprisonment of militant feminists, of the rape and beating of high

school students for requesting the validation of their exams, and of rape of women prisoners.

The criminal, barbaric and inhumane practice of mass rape is also responsible for the spread of HIV/AIDS. This scourge has ceased to be simply a health problem in my country. With its tragic consequences, it now has a worrying effect on development. AIDS is a significant obstacle to progress and national development.

It was estimated at the end of 1999 that 1,100,000 adults and children in the Democratic Republic of the Congo had been infected with this fatal virus. Children orphaned by the disease are estimated to number 800,000, of whom 450,000 are still alive. In the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo — the part occupied by Ugandan troops — in the space of two years the prevalence of AIDS has increased from 4.5 per cent, the national average, to 22 per cent. In other words, it has increased by five times. The catastrophe looming on the horizon is attributed to sexual contacts with Rwandan and Ugandan soldiers, who come from countries where the disease is widespread.

Besides AIDS, it is worth noting here the resurgence of diseases such as malaria, now responsible for 500,000 deaths a year, many of which are of children under five years of age. The national maternal mortality rate is 1,837 deaths per 100,000 births, compared with 3,000 in the occupied provinces, which is one of the highest rates in the world.

On 9 June the American non-governmental organization, the International Rescue Committee (IRC), announced that at least 1,700,000 people, out of a population of 20 million, in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo had died since 1 January 1999 as a result of combat and the breakdown of infrastructures. In the village of Moba, Katanga, alone, 47 per cent of infants under one year of age have died since 2 August 1998. Throughout this area, to escape the violence, people are fleeing into the forest, where, completely neglected, they are dying of malaria.

It would be useful for the international community to get accurate figures of the number of people who have died, directly and indirectly, in the fighting throughout our national territory, and to study the impact of these deaths on the Congolese family. Congolese women have lost their lives, husbands, sons, daughters, brothers and fathers in this absurd war, which for three years now has allowed Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda to outrage the entire world with impunity.

It is obvious that Congolese women are directly involved in the promotion of peace in their country. Their search for a liberating peace should be supported by all the members of the Security Council, because the restoration of peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo will help Congolese women to pursue their struggle against poverty and all forms of violence against them. The Council must assist them in achieving this goal by denouncing the war of aggression and discouraging all those countries involved in the war against my country, which dehumanizes Congolese women.

Given that the Council has asked my Government and the other parties to demonstrate their commitment to peace in the weeks to come, it has no right to withdraw from the peace process; rather, it should mobilize as it did so well in Kosovo, in East Timor and, more recently, in the crisis in the Middle East. My delegation can in no way believe that, on 15 December, the international community will decide to withdraw from the search for peace in my country because powerful and differing interests do not wish it to be restored there. If it were to do so, the international community would be abandoning millions of Congolese citizens, men and women, to their sad fate and to the schemes of those who were so recently lauded as a new breed of leader in Africa. Abandoning us would mean not helping people at risk. It is inconceivable and unimaginable that the Governments of people who claim to be steeped in humanism and to respect human rights could even consider taking such an attitude.

In conclusion, let me reiterate what my delegation has continuously stated to a world dedicated to peace and justice. My delegation wants the entire world to understand that the men, women and children of the Democratic Republic of the Congo are tired of a war of aggression that is futile and stupid. My people want and seek peace. They want to live in a Democratic Republic of the Congo that is strong and united, enjoying full sovereignty and territorial integrity. They want to live in understanding with the peoples of the nine States bordering my country.

My Government is open to any proposal or initiative aimed at putting a speedy end to the barbaric bloodshed that has engulfed the entire Great Lakes

region. Whether it comes via the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, as amended by resolution 1304 (2000), in which the Security Council demanded that Uganda and Rwanda, which have violated the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, withdraw all their forces from the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo without further delay; via direct negotiations between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and aggressor countries; or via direct negotiations between the Government and our Congolese brothers who have chosen to resolve their differences by violence, the main thing is that we should be able to work together to achieve a lasting peace for the entire region. Such a peace could be guaranteed by the international community through an international conference to address the thorny problems of law and order in the region and to consider what is needed to achieve peace and sustainable development throughout the region, so that the underlying and immediate causes of the disaster overwhelming our subcontinent can be eliminated once and for all.

Given their rich social, cultural and ethnic diversity, the peoples of our subregion deserve such a peace. They are entitled to peace, without which any hope for human dignity, for the advancement of women, for wellbeing and for development would be futile and compromised.

The President: I thank the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for his kind words addressed to my country and to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of South Africa. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): I thank you, Sir, for conducting this meeting today. I know that, in the next few days, you will be returning home to a warm, sunny Namibia — for a while, I hope — and I just want to pay tribute to you and to tell you before this body that you have made us proud to be people of southern Africa and, more importantly, to be Africans. Your stewardship in the General Assembly and in this body has made us keep the faith that things could, indeed, get better. I thank you very, very much for everything you have done for us during your term of visit in New York.

In our commitment to dealing with conflicts in a comprehensive manner, including addressing the root causes of conflicts, we must acknowledge that the widespread exclusion of women from political and economic decision-making is a significant obstacle to the realization of sustainable global peace and security. In other words, and as was so concisely summed up in a very powerful and simple statement in the final declaration of the All-Party Burundi Women's Peace Conference, held in Arusha from 17 to 20 July 2000, "women's rights are human rights".

The significance of women's active contributions to South Africa's liberation and their relevance to today's debate go far beyond South Africa, our subregion and even our continent. Indeed, for South Africa and the rest of us in the region of the Southern African Development Community, this topic has special relevance, bearing in mind the critical and essential roles played by women in our struggles for liberation from colonization, apartheid, conflict and repression. These women, and many others elsewhere in the world, have demonstrated that women have an indispensable social, political and economic role to play in bringing about sustainable peace and security.

It was for this reason that, on 9 August this year, at our National Women's Day celebrations, the South African President dedicated a monument in tribute to the role played by women in shaping a democratic, non-racist and non-sexist South Africa. In that ceremony, President Mbeki unveiled the portraits of courageous and dedicated women leaders, such as Lilian Ngoyi, Helen Joseph, Raheema Moosa and Sophie de Bruyn. These leaders were at the forefront of the struggle for a just society in South Africa. We pay special tribute to them for their role in leading the mass defiance campaigns against apartheid legislation and to the many unsung heroines of that struggle, which culminated in 1956 with a march by tens of thousands of women to Pretoria. Thanks to the positive examples and contributions of pioneering leaders such as these, South Africa is today committed to achieving and sustaining equal participation and representation of women in our Parliament and Government, which currently stand at about 30 per cent.

It is true that, in today's conflicts, it is civilians, and women and children in particular, who bear the brunt of gross abuses of human rights. There is another dimension, however, and we need to move beyond the limited approach of portraying women solely as victims in conflicts.

For all societies in this world, and more so for societies in conflict, women play a key role in sustaining both the family and the wider community. In many developing countries, our communities are fracturing under the combined weight of internecine conflicts, poverty, communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, mass urbanization, economic restructuring and other effects of globalization. More often than not, it is the working women who must quite literally put bread on the table and hold families together.

Given the central role that women play in the social, political and economic development of our societies, it is morally right and logical that the full realization of equal political and economic rights for women must be treated as an essential component of our collective approach to preventing and resolving conflicts.

In Africa, where there are already signs that there is a political and economic revival, it is clear that women have played, must play and will continue to play a full role in the renaissance of our continent. Anything less, therefore, would be short-sighted, and despite our best intentions, our collective commitment to address the root causes of conflicts will come to naught unless women are afforded an equal role.

In her address to the General Assembly on 13 September 2000, South Africa's Foreign Minister, Ms. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, said,

> "The founders of the United Nations based the Charter on the assertion of human dignity, human rights and the equality of women and men and the aim of promoting better social standards. (*A/55/PV.13, p.11*)
>
> The equality of women and men still remains a subject of great concern. All we need to do is look around this Hall to realize how far we are from realizing the vision of the founding Members of the United Nations. Secondly, the feminization of poverty is a big problem. The marginalization of women, both in their countries and in the multilateral forums, means that our countries and organizations, including the United Nations, are functioning at half-capacity and are deprived of the unique qualities, energies and creativity that women would bring." (*ibid., p.12*)

We have all already agreed that the root causes of conflict are poverty, disease, lack of education, lack of human and political rights and a lack of economic opportunity and justice. We must now equally agree that we cannot adequately address these problems if we exclude over half of humanity from enjoying these rights. Neither can we do so if we continue to prevent womankind from participating in the process of finding and implementing solutions.

As a minimum, we suggest that we must pay special attention to the impact of armed conflicts on the rights of women and girls and promote and implement specific strategies to protect and assist women and girls in armed conflicts. We must promote strategies that maximize women's participation in domestic, regional and international conflict prevention, management and resolution initiatives. The United Nations must set an example by making sure women are represented adequately at all decision-making levels. In addition, we must promote and strengthen women's participation in comprehensive post-conflict peace-building initiatives, including in such areas as electoral, constitutional, legal and judicial reforms.

In conclusion, let me say that it is my delegation's hope that today's debate in the Security Council will strengthen existing efforts in the United Nations system, including in the General Assembly and in the relevant United Nations agencies, to improve the status of women globally.

My delegation would like to express its profound thanks to the presidency of the Council for this month for placing the issue of women and peace and security on the agenda. We also welcome the transparent and participatory approach adopted by the presidency this month in arranging today's debate. The imaginative use of the Arria formula to hold yesterday's consultations between Council members and non-State actors from international women's rights organizations and other human rights organizations is further welcome, as they have much to offer our deliberations and decisions.

This is further evidence of the positive trend towards the adoption of more open working methods and procedures in the Security Council. We indeed appreciate that.

The President: I thank the representative of South Africa for his kind words addressed to the Namibian delegation and to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Liechtenstein. I invite her to take a seat at the Council table and to make her statement.

Mrs. Fritsche (Liechtenstein): At the outset, I wish to express my delegation's gratitude and satisfaction to you, Mr. President, and to the Government of Namibia for organizing today's open debate on women and peace and security. You have, in addition, chosen 24 October, United Nations Day, for this debate, thereby underscoring the commitment of the Security Council to pay special attention to the role of women in preventive diplomacy, armed conflict, peacekeeping and peace-building.

I would also like to thank Angela King and Noeleen Heyzer for their thought-provoking statements and the suggestions contained therein.

The United Nations engagement in peace operations has evolved from peacekeeping in its traditional sense towards multidimensional peace support operations. Despite this, the gender considerations in peace processes have not been adequately addressed. A full understanding of the impact of armed conflict on women and girls is necessary in order to effectively promote and maintain international peace and security. Women and children constitute a disproportionate number of civilians affected by armed conflict. An estimated 80 per cent of all internally displaced persons and refugees are women and children. During armed conflict, women and girls are threatened by rape, sexual exploitation, trafficking and sexual humiliation. Every setting presents risks, whether at home, while fleeing or in camps for displaced persons. Sexual violence has devastating effects on the life of women and children, ranging from sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS to humiliation and trauma.

Humanitarian assistance in armed conflict should therefore include psychosocial and reproductive health services, and relief workers have to be trained to respond to needs of victims of sexual violence. My delegation would welcome the establishment of systems for reporting on sexual violence, abuse, exploitation and trafficking of women and girls within military and civilian populations, to be followed by enforcement and monitoring mechanisms for peacekeeping personnel. It is, in our view, also necessary to establish disciplinary and oversight mechanisms in all peace support missions.

Peacekeeping personnel must meet the highest standards of conduct. Training in international human rights and humanitarian law, including gender training and instruction on their responsibility towards civilian communities, should be an integral part of the preparatory process. We all know that violations against women and children have also been committed by United Nations personnel. These offences must be investigated and the offenders punished.

The authorization or perpetration of sexual violence during armed conflict constitutes a violation of international law. If these violations happen on a large scale or as a matter of policy, they constitute a crime against humanity. Historic precedents have been set by the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda. These Tribunals have, for the first time in history, punished sexual violence in a civil war and have classified rape as an act of genocide. My delegation is very gratified at the fact that the Statute of the International Criminal Court will have the potential to protect and promote the human rights of women and girls. The Statute also addresses trauma counselling, rehabilitation and compensation to the victims of war crimes and calls for gender and child-sensitive court procedures.

Although the contribution of women in peace-building, peacemaking and conflict resolution is being increasingly recognized, the role of women in preventive diplomacy has so far been very limited. The Secretary-General's strategic plan of action (A/49/587) calls for an increase in the participation of women at decision-making levels in conflict resolution and peace processes. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action stress the need for an increased participation of women in conflict resolution at decision-making levels. The Beijing +5 outcome document, inter alia, encourages the involvement of women in decision-making at all levels and the achievement of gender balance in the appointment of women and men with full respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution, including as special envoys and special representatives and the performance of good offices on behalf of the Secretary-General, in matters relating to peacekeeping, peace-building, and in operational activities. The women Ambassadors to the United Nations began to address this problem in 1996 by establishing and updating a list of female candidates, and we intend to continue our efforts to considerably enhance the role of women in preventive diplomacy.

In this context, my delegation welcomes the Windhoek Declaration, issued on the tenth anniversary of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group, which proposes that an advisory board should be set up within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to ensure that a comprehensive database as well as existing lists of female candidates be given due consideration. My delegation is furthermore of the opinion that gender issues need to be mainstreamed into the actions that will result from this debate and, in particular, also in the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Brahimi report, which lacks a chapter on gender.

Every attempt towards democratization and peace-building must be based on fundamental values, including the principles of gender equality. Women must therefore be participants in all peace processes and at any stage of these processes. Today's debate is a concrete step towards realizing this goal.

The President: I thank the representative of Liechtenstein for her kind words addressed to Namibia.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Singapore. I invite him to take a seat at the Council and to make his statement.

Mr. Mahbubani (Singapore): Mr. President, few leaders have had the honour and distinction of presiding over both the General Assembly and the Security Council in the same year. You belong to a small, distinguished league. I am confident that your unique experiences with both the key organs of the United Nations will result in an unusually productive month in the Council.

The decision of Namibia to place the issue of the role of women in peace and security on the Council's agenda reflects Namibia's keen awareness of the impact of peace and security issues upon women. We are equally pleased that the discussion will not be one-dimensional. It will not reflect just women's traditional role as victims of war but also, more recently, as key victors in several peace processes. The role of women has changed significantly in the twentieth century, and the Council should recognize this.

Clearly, over the course of human history, more men than women have died in armed conflict. But women have also suffered in countless ways. Mothers grieve when they lose sons in battle; so do wives when they lose husbands. We saw this most recently in Bosnia when men were separated from women and brutally slaughtered.

Women have also suffered more directly. Over the ages, in armed conflicts women have been victims of direct and immediate physical injury that involve rape, forced prostitution, sexual slavery, forced pregnancy, abduction and even slaughter. Women also make up the majority of refugee and internally displaced populations that result from the outbreak of conflicts. Downstream consequences of sexual violations, loss of male family members and eviction from their homes impose incalculable burdens on women, and these may last several years after the end of conflict.

Clearly, these barbaric practices must come to an end. One of the greatest contributions of the twentieth century the clear spelling out of the norms that should govern armed conflict. But as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) recently observed,

> "If women are subject to so many of the tragic repercussions of armed conflict, it is not from any shortcoming in the rules protecting them, but rather because the laws are not observed. International humanitarian law grants wide-ranging protection to women. There are more than 560 articles in the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols of 1977, which protect both women and men, as civilians, and also as combatants who have fallen into enemy hands. Among these, more than 40 are of specific concern to women."

The tragedy we face today is that these norms were written on the assumption that armed conflict would take place between well-trained and well-disciplined armies which could be schooled in the rules of war. Unfortunately many combatants today are young and lack the basic rudiments of education. In a speech to the Council in April this year, we quoted from a booklet published by the ICRC entitled, "International humanitarian law: Answers to your questions":

> "The lack of discipline among belligerents, the arming of the civilian population as weapons flood the territory and the increasingly blurred distinction between combatants and non-combatants often cause confrontations to take an extremely brutal turn, in which there is little place for the rules of law."

Realistically, we could do little at this stage to try to educate such combatants on the civilized rules of war. The only solution is for the international community to deliver robust responses when major infractions take place. This is too large a subject to be covered in this debate. But we are pleased that the Summit meeting of the Council endorsed in general the Brahimi report. If the Council can now follow through with deeds that match its words, all victims of armed conflict, women as well as men and children, will benefit enormously.

The resolve of the international community to tackle the issue of impunity should be demonstrated by meting out swift and effective justice to those who violate universally accepted norms. Indeed, the death penalty would be both an appropriate judicial response and a key deterrent to prevent a recurrence. The International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, which the Council established in response to the widespread violations of international humanitarian law, have done much good work. Unfortunately, many key perpetrators remain unapprehended. Many have not even had charges filed against them. The wheels of justice have to be seen to be moving more swiftly if they are to provide any deterrence at all.

One major change between the second half of the twentieth century and earlier times was the growing recognition that women can play an effective role in ending or resolving conflict. You expressed this well, Mr. President, when you addressed the gathering on the occasion of International Women's Day on 8 March this year:

> "Women know intimately the horrific warfare and bloodshed that they face daily in conflict zones, but they also know the conditions that need to be met to ensure that the peace in their countries is sustainable, equitable and just. Women and children are the first victims of conflicts. Is it any wonder, then, that women are uniting to end the conflicts that destroy the lives of their loved ones, as well as of their communities? Women are half of every community. Are they, therefore, not also half of every solution?" (*GA/SM/157*)

The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) should be commended for highlighting the significant contributions women have made towards both achieving and consolidating peace. In this regard, we also commend both Ms. Noeleen Heyzer and Ms. Angela King for the excellent statements they made earlier today. I would also recommend that we read carefully UNIFEM's publication entitled "Women at the Peace Table: Making a Difference". It has captured well many examples of the achievements of women all over the world in fostering the conditions for peace and stability. I will cite a few examples.

In South Africa, women formed a strong Women's National Coalition that cut across racial, social and political lines, contributing in no small measure to South Africa's success in establishing a democratic Government today. In Northern Ireland, another women's coalition, the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition, which drew its membership from both the Catholic and Protestant communities, also succeeded in galvanizing the grassroots and securing a seat at the peace table. In Guatemala, women's voices and visibility in the peace process were achieved again through the existence of a cross-party and cross-sectoral women's coalition. The exertions of their sisters in Georgia, Palestine and Cambodia, often in difficult and even hostile environments, have also led to positive outcomes. This morning we saw a video presentation of the determination of the women of Burundi and elsewhere in their efforts to contribute to the peace process. Their courage should set an example for us all.

Having praised the contributions of women towards peace, I hope that I will be forgiven for introducing a slightly politically incorrect note. It is true that women have often sought peace. But it is also true that women have on occasion displayed equal propensity to encourage human rights violations. When they were not in positions of leadership, women have sometimes, as wives, supported and participated in the evil deeds of their husbands. As some of those present may be mystified by these comments, let me explain that we in South-East Asia have had direct experience of this, as some of the wives of the Khmer Rouge leaders were as brutal as their husbands during the genocide in Cambodia. Lady Macbeth was certainly no solitary exception. As we reflect on this issue, we may have to acknowledge that neither vice nor virtue is gender based, nor is it confined to young or old.

In considering how we can better harness the potential of women playing a role in enhancing peace and security, we should therefore be honest and

realistic. In not all situations have women marched for peace. Some have marched for war. We see this on our CNN screens occasionally. To achieve real peace and security, we must gain the commitment of both men and women to enhance peace.

To our mind, the surest way of developing and sustaining peace is to make all citizens of the society stakeholders in peace. For this reason, development issues cannot be divorced from peace. Those who live in abject poverty, as many do, have no vested interest in pursuing peace if peace fails to uplift them. The temptation to loot, pillage, rape and murder grows more acute when there is little to lose. But a population that believes that tomorrow will be better than today will be more inclined to pursue peace. Peace and development should therefore be seen as two sides of the same coin. Both women and men can and should play an equally important role.

The President: I thank the representative of Singapore for his kind words addressed to me and my delegation.

Mr. Ahmad (Pakistan): I first express our appreciation to you, Mr. President, for convening today's open debate on an important subject of interest to all of us. We are particularly pleased to see you, as Foreign Minister of a great country, Namibia, preside over this Security Council meeting only a few weeks after the Millennium Summit, which owed its success to your diplomatic skills and true qualities of a freedom fighter.

We all have a shared concern about the plight of women in armed conflicts. This is an issue that has not received adequate attention from the international community. We therefore view the present initiative as an important opportunity to reflect on issues concerning the protection of women in conflict situations and their role in conflict resolution, conflict prevention and peace-building.

The issues raised in the background paper circulated by Ambassador Andjaba and the elements proposed for incorporation in the draft resolution which — we are happy about the change in working methods — will be considered by the Security Council this afternoon, on the subject of women and peace and security, are most pertinent. However, their detailed consideration and implementation cannot be the exclusive responsibility of the Security Council. The Council can focus on some aspects that fall within its domain. In fact, most of the issues covered in the background paper are currently being discussed in the Economic and Social Council and other relevant bodies of the General Assembly. So, instead of duplicating our efforts, we must focus our attention on strengthening the existing mechanisms. Each organ of the United Nations has its own defined sphere of responsibilities that must be respected.

Mr. Andjaba took the Chair.

We all know that the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action contain comprehensive recommendations on women and armed conflicts. Unfortunately, there is less enthusiasm about ensuring implementation of the relevant provisions of the Beijing Declaration. There is a need to ensure their early and effective implementation. It would not be prudent to start the process anew at a forum that does not have the mandate to deal with all the relevant issues in a comprehensive manner.

Having said that, my delegation notes with concern that during the last decade the number of conflicts has increased manifold. So has the devastation that has been inflicted upon civilian populations around the world, particularly women, children and the elderly. In recent years a number of United Nations reports have highlighted the suffering of women and children in armed conflicts. This catalogue of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law is an affront to humanity.

Violence against women has taken on myriad shapes and forms, including sexual slavery, rape, systematic rape, sexual abuse and forced pregnancies. Displacement compounded by the loss of home and property, poverty, family disintegration, separation and other consequences of armed conflict is severely affecting target populations, especially women and children. Girls are also abducted or recruited, in violation of international law, into situations of armed conflict, including as combatants, sexual slaves or providers of domestic services. The recommendations contained in various reports on violence against women and children should be implemented to improve their plight in conflict situations.

Article 7 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirms that

> "All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law." (*General Assembly resolution 217 A (III)*)

Article 55, subparagraph (c), of the Charter stresses

> "universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion."

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women is a giant step towards protection of the rights of women against all forms of violence.

Unfortunately, civilians are subjected to enormous suffering despite the existence of comprehensive international legal instruments. Violations of the rights of women in conflict situations are indeed violations of fundamental human rights and principles of international humanitarian law. Respect for these legal instruments needs to be ensured by all the Member States of the United Nations through intergovernmental processes. It cannot be imposed from outside, nor can it be subjected to any imaginary so-called international standards.

It is unfortunate that rape is used as a tactical weapon of war to humiliate and weaken the morale of the perceived enemy. This pernicious weapon is used to terrorize a population or to force civilians to flee, as has recently been practised in the territory of the former Yugoslavia — particularly in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Croatia — and in the Great Lakes region of Africa. Even today, rape is being used as a weapon of war against innocent women and girls in Jammu and Kashmir, where people are struggling for their right to self-determination. Amnesty International catalogued such incidents in Jammu and Kashmir as early as 1993, highlighting that

> "rape and ill-treatment of women are usually reported to have taken place during counter-insurgency operations".

In Afghanistan the reluctance on the part of the international community to engage in the country's reconstruction and rehabilitation process continues to compound the suffering of the civilian population, particularly that of women and girls. Apparently, there is a cultural bias when it comes to dealing with the problems and issues relating to the womenfolk in Afghanistan. Instead of measures to address their genuine humanitarian needs, sanctions have been imposed on the people of Afghanistan that have further compounded their suffering.

We also cannot ignore the plight of Palestinian women, and their agony, as they see their young sons killed before their eyes — not for committing any crimes, but for raising their voices for freedom, justice and their right to self-determination.

Sanctions imposed on other countries also need to be revisited to minimize the suffering of civilian populations, particularly the suffering of women and children. Notably, the background paper on women and peace and security and the proposed draft resolution do not say anything about sanctions and their impact on women and children. Due consideration must therefore be given to this important aspect of the debate.

It has also been widely reported that poverty, hunger and desperation in conflict situations may force women and girls into prostitution, obliging them to offer sex for food, shelter or safe conduct through war zones. This aspect has not been highlighted in the background paper that is under review in the Council today.

The focus of the international community should be devoted equally to poverty eradication, development, conflict resolution and conflict prevention so that crimes in any form or manifestation against any section of a society, be it men or women, are not allowed to take place in the first instance. The Charter places a clear obligation on the Security Council to uphold international peace and security. There can be no two views on the fact that prevention is better than cure. The Council therefore needs to act to treat the disease itself, rather than to react to deal with the symptoms subsequently — with the attendant high costs in terms of widespread death and devastation. In meeting its Charter obligations, the Security Council must not only ensure prompt and effective responses to crisis situations irrespective of their geographical locations, but also avoid selectivity in the implementation of its resolutions and the application of different standards to conflicts in different parts of the world.

In conclusion, may I reaffirm that Pakistan remains committed to the peace, prosperity, progress and development of peoples in all parts of the world. We will continue to extend unflinching support and

cooperation to achieve these goals, particularly the alleviation of the sufferings of women and children in armed conflicts around the world.

Lastly, I need not elaborate on the role of women in my country. We have produced women heads of Government, women leaders of opposition parties, women elected leaders, women doctors, professors, academics, scholars, newspaper editors and diplomats. In order to see this reality, one need only look right here.

The President: I thank the representative of Pakistan for the kind words he addressed to my Minister for Foreign Affairs and to the Namibian delegation.

The next speaker is the representative of Japan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Akasaka (Japan): Having experienced frequent outbreaks of regional conflict since the end of the cold war, the international community has come to realize the need to address major issues relating to conflicts, such as the protection of innocent civilians in armed conflict and the prevention and settlement of conflicts, from a wider perspective and in a more comprehensive manner, in order to put an end to the scourge of armed conflicts in the new century. In this context, for example, significant progress has been made in the field of the protection of children during and after conflicts through efforts to put emphasis on that issue.

From that standpoint, Japan shares the view that a gender perspective must be taken into account, and that concrete issues such as the protection of women in armed conflicts and their participation in peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building should be further discussed if progress is to be made in this area.

I should therefore like to pay high tribute to you, Mr. President, for your thoughtful initiative in convening this open debate. My delegation also commends Ms. Angela King, Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, and Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), for their efforts in this regard.

This year, at the Beijing + 5 special session of the General Assembly, the international community reaffirmed its strong commitment to mainstreaming a gender perspective in every area of human endeavour. Among the efforts being made to follow up that commitment, this discussion in the Security Council is particularly timely and meaningful, as the issue of conflict is the most critical issue that we have to tackle in the twenty-first century.

In that context, we welcome the efforts already made in this area, such as the participation of women in the Burundi peacemaking process and the adoption of the Namibia Plan of Action on the occasion of the Windhoek seminar on mainstreaming a gender perspective in multidimensional peace support operations. I believe that, with these precious inputs, our discussion today will lead us to an exploration of further concrete actions in this area.

I would like to take this opportunity to state the views of Japan on some important points relating to this issue. First of all, there is a clear need to strengthen efforts to provide protection to women and girls in conflict situations. In view of the horrific reality that we are facing, where innocent civilians continue to be victimized in armed conflicts, the protection of women and girls should be our paramount concern. I would like to appeal to all the parties to conflicts and to the international community as a whole to form as clear a picture of the situation as possible, face up to it and together take the measures necessary to protect women and girls and to introduce the viewpoint of women victims into the peacemaking process.

The second point I would like to emphasize is the importance of the role of women, especially in peace-building. Because women are such a vital part of every grass-roots community, it is essential that they be involved if the vicious circle of poverty and conflict is to be broken and if rehabilitation is to be successful. Japan has long attached special importance to the role of women in addressing poverty, which is a root cause of conflict, and for that reason has promoted the Women in Development initiative that it launched at the Fourth World Conference on Women.

In view of the need to enhance the participation of women in the rehabilitation process, which makes an important contribution to peace-building, Japan actively supported the convening of a symposium on empowerment of women in post-conflict reconstruction, held by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Tokyo last July.

Further, Japan has been implementing many projects in areas such as education, health and the economic independence of women in countries in Asia and Africa, such as Cambodia and Ethiopia, all of which have been severely damaged as a result of conflict. Japan intends to continue those efforts.

My third point is the importance of a comprehensive approach to this issue, and the concomitant need for cooperation among international organizations, Governments, non-governmental organizations and other partners of the international community. Today's debate should be a turning point for us. We should move from a phase of advocacy to one of concrete action. Japan is of the view that relevant international organizations, such as UNIFEM, that have gender expertise should strengthen their efforts to study specific measures to achieve gender mainstreaming in conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building, and to implement programmes to assist women in the field.

Japan believes deeply that we should put emphasis on a human-centred approach which gives priority to respect for the life and dignity of every human being in order to achieve in the coming century an international society characterized by peace and stability. We are convinced that greater participation by women in the process of peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building would greatly contribute to the consolidation of peace and stability, as women are the ones who have been experiencing a serious degradation of life and dignity in armed conflict.

I would like to conclude my statement by reaffirming Japan's readiness to take an active part in the efforts of the international community to address this issue, guided by the Council's debate here today.

The President: I thank the representative of Japan for the kind words he addressed to the Namibian delegation.

The next speaker is the representative of Cyprus. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Zackheos (Cyprus): Although my delegation aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union, I would like to make a few additional remarks. I would like at the outset to express my appreciation to you, Mr. President, for convening this open meeting of the Security Council on this most important and relevant subject. This initiative of the Namibian presidency confirms the principled and important role that Namibia, and you personally, Sir, play with respect to international issues and, in particular, in the promotion of human rights. We welcome this initiative as yet another step forward in the efforts of the international community, as expressed through open discussion in the Security Council, on matters pertaining to conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building.

The most tragic aspect of armed conflict has been the heavy toll that civilians usually bear when caught between opposing armies. The proliferation of conflict in many areas of our planet and the gross violations of the most basic human rights of civilians have been a major concern of the international community, as testified to by the open debates that have taken place in this very Chamber concerning the protection of civilians in armed conflict, the protection of children and the protection of humanitarian assistance to refugees and others in conflict situations.

The most negative aspect of armed conflict, with both short- and long-term effects, is the plight of the most vulnerable groups of civilians, namely women and children. During armed conflict, the effect on families and traditional ways of life can be devastating. Great numbers of women are not only under the constant threat of sexual violence and death; but often have to endure the loss of parents, children or husbands and are forced to assume the role of main breadwinner and carry the heavy economic burden of the survival of their families.

It is imperative for the international community, and constitutes a special duty of the Security Council, to assist and protect these women and children. The Security Council, in responding to such crises, should always take into consideration their situation and suffering, and pursue solutions that are based on its resolutions. We hope that this open debate of the Security Council will lead to practical measures on the role of women in peace-building and on humanitarian issues and the protection of women during peacekeeping and post-conflict support operations.

One way to achieve this would be through the establishment of an independent panel of experts with the participation of the Secretariat, relevant agencies and civil society.

One of the areas on which my delegation places utmost importance is the plight of refugees and internally displaced persons. The painful experience of the displacement of almost one third of the population of my country in 1974 demonstrated to the Government and the people of Cyprus the central role of women in post-conflict and peace-building situations. Their role in facing the adverse consequences of the invasion, occupation and displacement and in rebuilding our economy, despite their suffering, has been immense. That is why we fully support the position that women's rights during and following armed conflict must be safeguarded, and their participation in efforts to rebuild war-torn societies supported by every means possible.

In this respect, we fully subscribe to the recommendations proposed by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and in the significant report entitled "Impact of armed conflict on children", prepared by Ms. Graça Machel, to whom I take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation.

Another issue which I would like to stress, with regard to the positive developments that have taken place in the last few years on the accountability of human rights violators, is the question of impunity. Cyprus warmly welcomes the efforts undertaken by the community of nations to finally put an end to impunity, as demonstrated in the inclusion, in the international criminal tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda, of the obligation to prosecute those responsible for the crimes of rape and sexual violence in civil war as perpetrators of grave breaches of international humanitarian law. The inclusion, as a war crime, of all forms of sexual violence against women in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court has been a major achievement in our common pursuit to end impunity for these abhorrent crimes.

The Representative of the Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons estimates that 40 million people live today as refugees or internally displaced persons. Close to 80 per cent of these people are women and children. Their tragic situation and their vulnerability do not usually stop with the end of armed conflict. The vast majority of them continue to face the threat of violations of their human rights long after the conflict has ended.

The phenomena of sexual exploitation and trafficking and child labour, including the use of children as soldiers, are realities that we cannot ignore. That is why it is of extreme importance that the rights of women in post-conflict situations be secured through constitutional means, so that the injustices and suffering inflicted on them not be allowed to continue. Their contribution to rebuilding their societies is important and must be guaranteed.

One final point I would like to make concerns the incorporation of the gender dimension in the approach of the United Nations, its specialized agencies and other actors involved in peacekeeping, peace-building and reconciliation efforts associated with situations of armed conflict. My delegation strongly supports the inclusion of a gender perspective in the provision of humanitarian aid and in the reconciliation efforts following ceasefire agreements. We would also like to pay tribute to the crucial role played by non-governmental organizations in highlighting the issue and in providing practical assistance on the ground.

Before concluding, I should also like to thank Ms. Angela King and, through her, the Division for the Advancement of Women, and Mrs. Noeleen Heyzer and UNIFEM for their devotion and considerable efforts in promoting the rights of women.

The President: I thank the representative of Cyprus for the kind words he addressed to me and to the Namibian delegation.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of the Republic of Korea. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Sun Joun-yung (Republic of Korea): Mr. President, I would like to begin by offering my delegation's thanks to you for organizing this open debate on the important issue of "Women and peace and security". Recalling last June's twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century," my delegation welcomes today's meeting as a timely effort to build on the outcome of the special session.

Although the threat of an armed conflict at the global level has continued to diminish since the end of the cold war, rampaging armed conflicts at the regional, national and local levels have increased, posing challenges to international peace and security. Though armed conflicts affect both women and men, the current patterns of conflicts make women and girls

particularly vulnerable to numerous threats because of their status in society and their gender. In most cases, casualties among combatants are outnumbered by civilian deaths, mostly women and children. Increasingly, parties to a conflict even engage in deliberate violence against women as a strategy of war and terrorism. The fear of such violence has created a mass flow of refugees and displaced persons, the majority of whom are women, adolescent girls and children.

Fortunately, there have been important developments in the treatment of violence against women in armed conflict. We welcome the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, which took gender concerns into account when defining genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and crimes of aggression. This Statute validates our agreement that no impunity is to be granted for the perpetrators of specific gender-related crimes.

I also appreciate the work of relevant United Nations agencies, such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for their coordinated and dedicated efforts. Nor should we forget the contributions of non-governmental organizations in raising awareness about the situation of women and girls in armed conflicts and in assisting them.

Despite the progress that has been made so far, much remains to be done to ensure gender-sensitive justice, to address the specific needs of women affected by armed conflicts and to increase the participation of women in peacekeeping, peace-building and reconciliation processes.

The relative absence of women in decision-making processes with regard to armed conflicts is also a cause for concern. My delegation shares the view of the Security Council that peace is inextricably linked with equality between women and men, and that women should play an equal part in maintaining peace and security. We urge the Security Council to continue to expand its involvement in this issue.

Having said that, I should now like to make a few points which in our view deserve the urgent attention and action of the international community. First of all, we must ensure, without further delay, the full participation of women at all levels of decision-making and implementation in peacekeeping and peace-building. We encourage gender balance in peace negotiations and in the appointment of special envoys and representatives of the Secretary-General. We also encourage States participating in peace negotiations to include women representatives, in order to reflect the special needs of women and girls.

Secondly, my delegation believes that United Nations peacekeeping operations should pay more attention to gender mainstreaming in their work. With the expansion of the work of peacekeeping operations in political affairs, public information, humanitarian assistance and refugee return, among other areas, the role of peacekeeping personnel in meeting women's and girls' specific needs is also being enlarged. To ensure the effective work of protecting and promoting women's needs and rights, specialized gender training should be provided to all peacekeeping operation personnel. In this respect, my delegation welcomes the Secretariat's efforts to provide Member States with gender awareness guidelines and materials. In addition, the number of female personnel in peacekeeping operations, in particular those personnel addressing women's special needs, should be increased. The Republic of Korea, for its part, has included women officers in its peacekeeping operation missions and plans to expand their number in the future.

Thirdly, considering that women are more likely than men to be placed in refugee camps, we believe that women refugees and displaced women should be more involved in the design and management of humanitarian activities so that they can benefit from these activities as much as men do. To this end, we ask the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other relevant United Nations agencies to provide all women and girls in refugee camps with appropriate health care and education and to ensure their safety.

Without full gender equality and the advancement of women, we cannot achieve the world envisioned in the Charter of the United Nations. All Members should make the utmost effort and fully cooperate with the relevant United Nations agencies to effectively protect women and girls in armed conflict, redress violations of their human rights and empower women as equal partners at every step of the process to achieve peace and security. My delegation wishes to reaffirm the strong commitment of the Republic of Korea to

contribute to the efforts of the international community to this end.

The President: I thank the representative of the Republic of Korea for his kind words addressed to my delegation.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is Mrs. Krishna Bose, Member of Parliament and Chairperson of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs of India. On behalf of the Council, I welcome her and invite her to take a seat at the Council table and to make her statement.

Mrs. Bose (India): We are very pleased to see you, Sir, presiding over the Council. The subject chosen for this debate is important to me as a woman and as a politician whose interests lie in foreign policy and security issues. We thank you for very thoughtfully sending around to your colleagues a folder of background reading which contains suggestions, presumably made by the Secretariat, for Council action.

In addressing a subject that is vast and complex, I will limit myself, as I hope the Council will, to those areas which are properly within its mandate: the impact on women when peace breaks down, and their role in conflict and its resolution.

The first point of concern must be that women bear a disproportionately large share of the burden of conflict, but have a marginal say in matters of war and peace. That is perhaps a function of the gender imbalance in our societies, which is reflected in positions of power and influence. On International Women's Day this year, the President of the Council issued a statement affirming that the equal access and full participation of women in power structures and their full involvement in all efforts for the prevention and resolution of conflict were essential for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. I thank the Council for those sentiments, but, looking around this table, I should also like to say that a Security Council dominated by men illustrates the problem, not the solution.

The second point is, of course, where the equality of the sexes — which we believe is a necessity — will lead us. Women form such a large proportion of the casualties of modern war because throughout the last century military doctrines no longer distinguished between combatants and civilians. From the Second World War onwards, civilians became preferred targets both because they were more vulnerable and because it was believed that the national will had to be broken to win a total war. Paradoxically, women became the favoured victims of modern war because they were not combatants.

Does the answer lie, therefore, in giving women the dubious right to fight alongside their menfolk in modern armies? Throughout history, women have taken up arms when the need has been desperate. The Rani of Jhansi led our first War of Independence in 1857, and died fighting. Kaipkire of the Herero led her people in b. 'es against European slave traders. Those, however, and others like them, were women who took up arms to fight against injustice. We need to consider the impact on our societies, and on their tendency to war, if women become part of and glorify the military culture. Who should women take as their model — Lysistrata, using her femininity to force men from war, or the Amazon, joining and beating men at their own bloody game? A generation ago, two psychologists, Eleanor Maccoby and Carol Jacklin, established that while certain gender stereotypes could not be proved, one could: men were the more aggressive sex. In every culture, the organized violence of war and conflict has been a male preserve. That is a steel purdah in which we can leave our men.

There is also the question of the technology of war. Until the two world wars, weapons were heavy and hard to use, designed for soldiers who had to meet minimum physical standards and be trained in their use. In total war, weapons had to be designed for conscripts who were not fit and had little or no training; they became light and simple to use. As Graça Machel pointed out in her study on children and armed conflict, light automatic weapons were what made it easy and tempting to use child soldiers. If women become a significant percentage of armies, it is a foregone conclusion that weapons will be adapted even more to suit them, and what is light enough for a woman to use is also very well suited for a young boy or girl. These new weapons will make for even more indiscriminate use and could very well increase the use of children in conflict.

These are not academic points, because in the Western societies whose norms tend to dominate thinking at the United Nations, women are now increasingly permitted by law to go into combat. At the United Nations, including in this Council, there are

repeated calls for a gender balance in the composition of peacekeeping forces, which, as the Brahimi report, prepared by a Panel dominated by men, has pointed out, increasingly go into situations where robust military action might be needed. Is it in the interest either of women or of peace, or of gender equality, for women to embroil themselves in conflict, even if it is in the cause of the United Nations? We have problems enough with the feminization of poverty; we need not feminize violence. It would be much better, surely, if women had a larger and more visible role in helping the United Nations to resolve conflicts, for instance, as special representatives of the Secretary-General. This the Council can and should encourage.

I want to make one more point about peacekeeping practices. The Council has decided that AIDS is a threat to security, and peacekeepers must all be issued contraceptives by the United Nations. Unfortunately, as the United Nations knows, to its cost, a large number of the troops it fields are poorly trained; others, in the 1990s, trafficked in women. Blue Helmets might very well now believe that if the United Nations is giving them contraceptives, they are expected to use them. AIDS has never been a problem in any United Nations peacekeeping operation; the exploitation of women unfortunately has. The Council's decision could make this worse.

Feminist lawyers argue that human rights law and international humanitarian law do not offer enough protection to women. This is a bit extreme; women's rights and needs have received the attention they deserve in the codification of international law. I do agree that there are loopholes even in the much stronger walls of legal protection that have been raised over the last 50 years, and these must be closed. However, insofar as these are treaty-based protections, action must be taken within the terms of these treaties, and by the States parties. Otherwise, in seeking to strengthen law, we would be undermining it. Therefore, unless there are treaties that give the Security Council a role in their implementation, we would urge the Council not to assume to itself rights and responsibilities that it does not have.

There is a further point, which we have made in this Council before. By definition, it is States that are parties to the treaty-based system of international law. By and large, they respect them, and when they do not, penalties arise, through the provisions of the treaties. When their actions gravely threaten peace and security, sanctions can be brought against them by action in this Council. The most egregious crimes against women in times of conflict, however, have been and are committed by irregular forces, often warring against Governments; they obey no laws and are, as experience has shown throughout the 1990s, much more immune to sanctions than Governments are. How, in practical terms, will the Council tackle these forces, which are responsible for the bulk of the crimes that continue to be committed against women?

Situations of conflict vary. Each has its own causes and consequences. Clearly, there cannot be off-the-shelf remedies or panaceas. We need to take practical and effective steps to mitigate the impact of conflict on women and to enhance their ability to restore and preserve peace. The Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations has many useful elements. We support the call in the Windhoek Declaration of 31 May 2000 urging the Secretary-General to ensure that appropriate follow-up measures are taken to implement this Plan of Action, in consultation with Member States.

The World Bank estimates that by 2015 the world will have more than 1.9 billion poor, most of them women. Globalization has affected both men and women, but women bear the double burden of inequality and marginalization. Empowering them is therefore both crucial and urgent. The Council will remember that the theme of the special session of the General Assembly in June this year was "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century". In considering the role of women in peace and security, the Council will, I am sure, bear in mind this wider perspective of the empowerment of women.

This may well be the last statement we will make in the Security Council before Namibia completes its current two-year term. We would therefore like to place on record our very warm appreciation for the work of the Namibian delegation in the Council, and for the courageous and independent stand Namibia has taken on difficult issues on its agenda.

The President: I thank the Member of Parliament and Chairperson of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs of India for her kind words addressed to my delegation.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of New Zealand, whom I invite to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Powles (New Zealand): May I congratulate you, Mr. President, on taking the initiative of holding this timely and relevant open debate, and also join the previous speaker in congratulating your delegation generally on its performance during its presidency. I would also like to recognize the substantial contribution to this debate made by Ms. King and Ms. Heyzer this morning.

I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of the countries of the Pacific Island Forum represented in New York — namely, Australia, Fiji, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu and my own country, New Zealand.

The past few years have seen increasing recognition of the many roles of women in relation to peace and security, and the effects on women of armed conflict. The rights of women, their empowerment and the maintenance of peace and security are fundamentally linked. The Beijing Declaration notes that

> "Women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power, are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace". (*A/CONF.177/20/Rev.1, Annex I, para. 13*)

It also recognizes the leading role that women have played in the peace movement and that women's full participation in decision-making, conflict prevention and resolution and all other peace initiatives is essential to the realization of lasting peace. In other words, women have both a key interest and a key role in the maintenance of peace and security.

The Beijing + 5 review reaffirmed the importance of gender-sensitivity and analysis in assessing the impact of conflict, in working with those affected by it and in action to bring about lasting peaceful solutions.

Beijing + 5 also recognized that situations of armed conflict are inextricably linked to violations of women's human rights, including through violence against women. It was noted that such violence was often of a sexual nature. Our delegations welcome the recognition of the seriousness of such acts in the Statute of the International Criminal Court, which makes certain forms of violence against women war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The differential impacts of conflict on women, and the important role women have in peace-building, have been apparent from experience in the Pacific region. Women have disproportionately borne the effects of conflicts in the region, such as the secessionist crisis that stretched from 1989 to 1998 on the Papua New Guinea island of Bougainville. Women's insistence that peaceful means be found to air grievances and attain a durable peace has been a constant underlying strength of the Bougainville peace process.

Women's groups in the Solomon Islands have played a key role in bringing the parties together and maintaining the momentum that culminated in the recent settlement agreed in Australia at Townsville. We hope they and other members of civil society will continue to be involved closely in the peace-building process.

In these countries, as in the aftermath of recent events in Fiji, women's full participation in peace-building is essential.

A gender-sensitive approach to peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building is essential and underlines the importance of ensuring adequate gender representation in all areas of the United Nations work dealing with peace and security issues. While the number of women serving in peace and humanitarian operations has been growing in recent years, the number of women employed in professional and policy positions continues to be low. We urge the Secretary-General to work to achieve gender equity throughout the Secretariat, including in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and to ensure that sufficient women officers and gender expertise are included in United Nations peace processes and operations and fact-finding missions. In this regard we welcome, as some others have today, the Brahimi report's recommendation regarding equitable gender distribution in the appointment of mission leaders. Accordingly we hope that Member States will incorporate a gender perspective into their decisions on the implementation of the report.

In particular we are concerned by the complete absence of women envoys or special representatives

and encourage the Secretary-General to urgently address this imbalance.

I would now like to say a few words on behalf of my own delegation only.

New Zealand was proud to host the Commonwealth South Pacific Gender Symposium on Peace and Politics in June of this year. The participants noted that women and children suffer the impacts of violent conflict disproportionately – yet they are often the ones left to cope with these impacts. The symposium recognized women's roles as mediators and leaders for peace and called upon Governments to increase women's participation in the process of peace-building. Participants considered it essential that gender and conflict training be provided for armed forces and police. New Zealand strongly supports this proposal and commends the Secretary-General's efforts to include gender affairs officers in operations such as the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). Through their work, the rights of women and girls are being promoted in all areas of UNTAET's activities.

The Commonwealth Symposium also noted the increase in domestic violence during armed conflict and the need to address this during and after the conflict. We are pleased to note that the police training curriculum developed by UNTAET in East Timor includes modules on human rights, including women's human rights, and that recruitment for the East Timor Police Academy has attracted a substantial and growing proportion of women. This should help to ensure gender-sensitive perspectives in the local police force and attention to women's well-being in situations of domestic and wider violence.

Women and children also tend to suffer disproportionately from the imposition of comprehensive economic sanctions. As we noted earlier this year, New Zealand supports "smart sanctions" to reduce the incidence of humanitarian suffering and mitigate any unintended negative consequences, particularly on women and children. The Council should also encourage impact-assessment studies before, during and after the imposition of sanctions to ensure that their effects are appropriately focused and monitored.

In conclusion, the Pacific Islands Forum delegations appreciate the opportunity to emphasize the need to integrate a gender perspective into this Council's work. A dual approach is needed. First, gender issues must be mainstreamed into all aspects of United Nations activities for the maintenance of peace and security. Secondly, women's participation in those activities must be improved. Today's open debate is a welcome step towards achieving those goals, and we hope that the Council will formulate an innovative and comprehensive programme for progress in these two very important respects.

The President: I thank the representative of New Zealand for his statement and for his kind words addressed to me and my delegation.

The next speaker is the representative of Zimbabwe. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Muchetwa (Zimbabwe): I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your initiative to convene a meeting of the Security Council on such an important subject as "Women and Peace and Security". Your Government and country are well known for providing leadership and a good example in promoting an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes.

Today's subject matter lies at the very centre of our endeavours to promote the culture of peace in human society. Rather than being treated as an agenda item to be ticked off the Council's work programme at the end of this meeting, this issue must be pursued on a continuing basis, and can be ignored only at our peril.

When war breaks out, invariably we all pay a cost as individuals, families and societies, and as nations and members of the international community. Every occurrence of an armed conflict is a serious indictment of humanity. War is, in fact, a dehumanizing experience. To the extent that armed conflict is a challenge to all of humanity, everything relating to peace and security becomes the responsibility of all of us.

Today's specific reference to "women and peace and security" reflects our acknowledgement of the particular vulnerabilities of women in conflict situations. It also reflects our acknowledgement of current inequalities in decision-making and power structures and, happily, our sincere endeavour to address that untenable condition.

That women have everything to lose and an unbearable cost to pay in the wake of armed conflict

establishes an undisputed mandate and role for them in all matters of peace and security. Unfortunately, and as correctly observed in the Windhoek Declaration of 31 May 2000 on the tenth anniversary of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group:

> "So far, women have been denied their full role in these efforts, both nationally and internationally, nor has the gender dimension in peace processes been adequately addressed."

Every episode of war is accompanied by chronicles of horrendous assaults on the dignity and humanity of women.

Dastardly as it is, the victimization of womenfolk has even been employed as a tool for the perpetration of war in some cases. The humanitarian fallout of armed conflict has almost always been disproportionately burdensome on women as refugees, as displaced persons or as traumatized heads of households with nothing but debris for a new beginning. Nobody can understand, let alone address this fallout better than women themselves.

There is a glaring need for mechanisms that enhance the protection of women and girls in conflict situations. Current statistics show that more than three quarters of all internally displaced persons and refugees are women and children. My delegation therefore supports Security Council calls upon all concerned to refrain from committing human rights abuses in conflict situations, to respect international humanitarian law and to promote non-violent forms of conflict resolution and a culture of peace.

However, it is obvious that preventive measures, which have the potential to resolve disputes before they erupt into violent confrontations, offer the best possible protection to all members of society. In this regard, it is crucial that we recognize the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building. The organized involvement of women at the grass-roots and other levels makes them the linchpins of any early-warning mechanism.

This meeting offers us an opportunity to once again call upon the United Nations and the international community at large to assist and cooperate with regional and subregional arrangements, such as the Organization of African Unity's Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, as they seek to build their capacity and develop common indicators for early warning, taking into account women and gender issues.

While distant international actors have tended to highlight only political and economic disruptions in the aftermath of armed conflict, the victims of war often wake up to social disorientation and disorder. In these collapsed communities, the role of women in re-establishing and preserving social order is unparalleled. As primary and continuing educators both in their families and in their communities, women play an important role in fostering a culture of peace in strife-torn societies. We call for the promotion and sustenance of this role on a continuing basis in order to prevent the resurgence or escalation of conflict, so that the culture of peace is inculcated in current and future generations. This constitutes a sure way of planting the seeds of a sustainable peace.

While women are not necessarily better connected to the grass roots or more committed to conveying the concerns of marginalized people, and while there is no evidence to suggest that women at the peace table are more committed than men to promoting the greater good of the population at large, women are more likely than men to have arrived at the peace table via civil activism, often with first-hand experience of the brutal consequences of violent conflict. Both men and women suffer during war, but women are more likely to be the targets of gender-based violence. Furthermore, the direct participation of women at the peace table is the most secure way to ensure that women's demands are incorporated into the agreements.

The maintenance and promotion of international peace and security cannot be realized without fully understanding the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, without effective institutional arrangements to guarantee their protection and without women's full participation in the peace process. We are pleased to note that, in many parts of the world representing all continents, from Africa to the Middle East and Asia, from Latin America to Europe, women have not waited to be invited to the peace table, but have risen to meet the challenge, with an impact that has been, in some cases, nothing short of legendary. While women clearly need access to the peace table in order to advance towards the goal of gender equality, the peace table also requires women's participation to truly uphold the principle of democracy and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace.

The President: I thank the representative of Zimbabwe for his kind words addressed to my country and to my delegation.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Indonesia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Widodo (Indonesia): I have the honour to address the Security Council in the debate on the issue of women and peace and security. Allow me first to express my appreciation to you, Sir, for your initiative on this issue as President of the Security Council for the month of October.

I would like to welcome the statements delivered earlier by the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan; by the Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, Ms. Angela King; and by the Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), Ms. Noeleen Heyzer.

The issue of women and peace and security is among the paramount items on the global agenda and, in fact, has been addressed over several decades. At the international conferences on women, the issue of women and peace was taken up as early as the Nairobi World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women and has since been more than adequately considered in United Nations forums, such as in the annual meetings of the Commission on the Status of Women and of the Third Committee of the General Assembly, and also by various United Nations bodies, such as UNIFEM and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

At the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, it was clearly recognized that the larger goals of equality, development and peace could not be achieved without the incorporation of the women's perspective at all levels of decision-making. One of the important steps taken on that occasion was to stress that women's involvement in decision-making was not only a question of quotas for women, but a process that also entails increased gender sensitivity in general, requiring appropriate training and more research on gender issues.

My delegation would also like to draw attention to the efforts that have been made at the regional level to address this issue. We commend the work that has been accomplished under the auspices of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), especially in convening the regional preparatory meeting for the follow-up of the Beijing Conference on Women in June 2000, which, inter alia, highlights peace processes with action to encourage the full participation of women at all levels of decision-making in conflict resolution, peacekeeping, peacemaking and preventive diplomacy.

We also welcome the initiative of ESCAP and UNESCO to convene a Regional Conference on Asian Women for a Culture of Peace, to be held in Hanoi in December this year. The plan of action to be adopted at that Conference is expected to promote equal participation in peacekeeping, peacemaking and preventive diplomacy. Moreover, it will outline the contribution of women to a culture of peace and sustainable development in Asia. We are confident that this forum will provide a comprehensive assessment of Asian women's political, social and economic empowerment and the educational requirements needed to strengthen their capacities to transform societies towards a culture of peace.

Let me underscore that violence against women should remain at the forefront of all agendas concerning the situation of women and should be regarded as a criminal offence. In that regard, I would note that Indonesia has adopted a "zero tolerance" policy on violence against women, and we are working with national women's groups, law enforcement and legislators to comprehensively address this serious problem. In fact, the State Minister for Women's Empowerment officially announced a joint State and community proclamation to eliminate violence against women, involving the Vice President, all Cabinet ministers and parliamentarians, including representatives of national and regional groups. The international community and regional and national groups should no longer accept the committing of acts against women with impunity. My delegation underlines the importance of such national efforts to address violence against women receiving the full support of the international community.

My delegation underlines that this issue should be addressed not only from the perspective of treating women as victims of armed conflicts, but also as makers of peace. Although historically women have maintained the family structure under the most difficult of circumstances and have very often assumed the role

of head of household, there is still a lack of participation of women in the peace process. The burden is disproportionately borne by women when peace breaks down, and seldom are women given a visible role in the decision-making process for making and maintaining peace.

I would like to note that one of the strategic objectives of the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women is to increase the participation of women in conflict resolution at decision-making levels and to protect women living in situations of armed conflict and other conflicts or under foreign occupation. While this goal must be pursued at the national level, it is important also to pursue it within the United Nations itself, with the appointment of women to senior posts and with equal participation in peace processes and conflict resolution. Indonesia therefore joins all those who call for a concerted effort by the international community to increase the participation of women in negotiations on conflict resolution and in decision-making positions at both national and international levels.

The Security Council itself could consider the importance of injecting the gender dimension into its decisions on conflict resolution and of its resolutions providing for a clear mandate on gender mainstreaming. With regard to fact-finding missions, the Council could include gender issues in their terms of reference. Likewise, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations could provide gender-sensitivity training for peacekeepers in the field and foster an awareness of the traumatic circumstances faced by women.

In considering the issue of women and peace and armed conflict we must not lose sight of the need to also address the root causes of conflicts and the link between social and economic development and peace and stability — especially so given the fact that women are disproportionately burdened by poverty. There is a need to develop and strengthen strategies and initiatives to reduce women's poverty levels and to protect women from the rapid changes inherent in globalization.

In addressing the overall issue of women and peace and security, Indonesia would agree that measures for that purpose could be developed through close cooperation between the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, noting that none of these organs is equipped to exclusively and comprehensively deal with these issues.

In concluding, while we support the initiative of the United Nations to deliberate on any areas relating to peace and security, we do hope that its activities will not duplicate those of other intergovernmental bodies, but rather will serve to complement those efforts.

The President: I thank the representative of Indonesia for his kind words addressed to my delegation.

The next speaker is the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Mwakawago (United Republic of Tanzania): It gives my delegation particular pleasure to see you, Sir, presiding over this open debate on women and peace and security. My delegation warmly welcomes the convening of this meeting and hopes that the outcome of this historic debate will contribute to a better understanding of the gender dimension of peace processes.

It is significant that in recognition of the importance that your country attaches to this issue, the seminar on "Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations" was held in Windhoek from 29 to 31 May 2000. In this regard my delegation supports the Namibia Plan of Action and the call made to the Secretary-General to ensure that appropriate follow-up measures are undertaken to implement it.

This debate on women, peace and security is an important reminder to all of us of the need to resolve conflicts, particularly those in Africa and elsewhere which are of grave concern to all of us. Due to these conflicts, about six million Africans are refugees and over 15 million people are displaced, between 60 and 80 per cent of whom are women and children.

The 2000 Machel review points out, in chapter 5, that:

> "During armed conflict, women and girls are continually threatened by rape, domestic violence, sexual exploitation, trafficking, sexual humiliation and mutilation."

They are at risk in all settings – be it at home, in flight or in camps. In some cases, systematic rape and terror

are used as weapons of war. After having been subjected to such atrocities, they are left with scars that take longer to heal.

There is no denying that it is women who shoulder the responsibility of supporting their families and communities. Women serve alongside their male counterparts in times of war. It is also women who serve at the forefront of peace movements. Under these circumstances, it is evident that we cannot continue excluding women from conflict resolution processes. Expanding the role of women in this area is imperative, not only to address inequities but also to ensure that our societies benefit from their approaches to preventing conflicts, solving conflicts and building peace.

Being direct victims of violence and discrimination, women have gained a great understanding of the need to address peace comprehensively. It is encouraging to note that given the prevalence of conflicts, particularly in Africa today, women have taken some initiatives to promote peaceful resolution of conflicts and to generate a culture of peace. In this context, the role of Burundian women in the peace process in their country — and the recognition of that role by President Nelson Mandela, the Facilitator of the Burundi peace process — should serve as an example and as a source of inspiration to the international community. It is the hope of my delegation that the Council will adopt a resolution that gives due weight to the role that women can play in peace negotiations and accord them due recognition. The international community needs, therefore, to agree on a framework that guarantees women that right.

Both the final outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century" and the Millennium Summit Declaration place emphasis on shared responsibility to maintain international peace and security. On the occasion of International Women's Day on 8 March, the then President of the Security Council, Ambassador Chowdhury of Bangladesh, observed in a statement to the Press:

> "Members of the Council note that although women have begun to play an important role in conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peace-building, they are still under-represented in decision-making in regard to conflict. If women are to play an equal part in security and maintaining peace, they must be empowered politically and economically, and represented adequately at all levels of decision-making, both at the pre-conflict stage and during hostilities, as well as at the point of peacekeeping, peace-building, reconciliation and reconstruction."

In reiterating this position, we call on the international community and Governments to intensify efforts aimed at the realization of the objective set out in that statement, including the enhancement of the role of women in various phases of the transition to peace and post-conflict reconstruction.

The President: I thank the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania for the kind words he addressed to my delegation.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Australia. I invite her to take a seat at the Council table and to make her statement.

Ms. Wensley (Australia): Thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this open debate.

As violence continues in the Middle East - and the United Nations and its Member States struggle to service a growing number of peace operations around the world — some may wonder about the value of the Council holding a thematic debate such as this. What does it really achieve?

Well, my delegation certainly thinks it worthwhile and welcomes the opportunity to participate.

We consider it valuable for several reasons. First, it contributes to the ongoing process of opening up the Council, not just to non-members, but to new ways of thinking about what constitute threats to international peace and security and, more important, how to deal with them.

Secondly, it helps us to move forward our broad agenda for the advancement of women, raising awareness of gender factors, moving consideration of so-called women's issues out of the enclaves of the Third Committee and the Commission on the Status of Women and into the central, vital organs of the United Nations.

Thirdly, this thematic debate should assist the United Nations in dealing with a range of other major challenges that it is confronting. There are real and

practical linkages to be made here with implementation of the Millennium Summit report and of the Brahimi report on peace operations, with the effort to establish the International Criminal Court; with the United Nations development agenda; and with the efforts to reform the United Nations and make it more effective. This debate could inform our thinking on how to deal with all these major areas of concern.

Of course, we are not starting from scratch. The building blocks are there, going back to the codification of the laws of armed conflict in the 1949 Geneva Conventions and their additional Protocols of 1977, in which the special needs of women in situations of armed conflict, both as combatants and as civilians, were recognized through clauses providing for their special protection.

As so many of the preceding speakers in the debate have recognized, the negotiation of the Statute of the International Criminal Court represented a quantum leap forward, recognizing specific crimes against women as both war crimes and crimes against humanity.

But I want to focus more today on women not so much as victims of armed conflict, as sufferers, as vulnerable people whose rights need protecting, but as contributors and active participants in problem solving. This is the important direction in which our thinking, as an international community, is evolving and where the Council can bring much needed momentum and muscle.

Just as we came to recognize — not so long ago — the critical link between gender and development, and to recognize that achieving sustainable development required the active participation and involvement of both women and men in the development process, so we are moving, I think relatively rapidly, to recognition that the same, vital linkage exists in relation to effective conflict resolution, peacemaking, peace-building and post-conflict activities.

As we have heard, the Council itself gave a valuable boost to this in March this year, in the statement it issued on International Women's Day, when it recognized publicly the link between peace and equality between men and women. Today's debate builds on that acknowledgement - that equal access and full participation of women in power structures and their full involvement in all efforts for the prevention and resolution of conflicts are essential for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. The Windhoek Declaration of May 2000 and the Namibia Plan of Action on "Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations", which were informed by the laborious three-year study conducted by the Division for the Advancement of Women and by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, were another very important step. Australia certainly can support many of their key conclusions and recommendations: that the gender dimensions of peace processes have not been adequately recognized; that women have so far been denied their full role in national and international peacekeeping and peacemaking operations; that the mandates of United Nations preventive peace missions, peacekeeping operations and peace-building should include provisions for women's protection and address gender issues; and that peace support operations should include appropriately staffed and integrated gender units and gender advisers.

The recent review on war-affected children by Graça Machel is also very important. A new chapter that she added to the review, on the role of women and the peace process, recognized that building peace from the grass-roots level is an important aspect of women's participation — that even as they are trying to hold their families together in war and post-war conditions, women are creating and sustaining peace at the community level. But this chapter went further, to argue that the role of women must go beyond this informal grass-roots level; that women have potential to make a greater contribution to peacemaking and peace-building; and that they should be given an active role in the formal processes of conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction. I am very happy that so many speakers in the debate have picked up on this new chapter.

So the gaps — and the possibilities — in relation to women's participation have been identified; the linkages are becoming more evident and acknowledged by authoritative voices; the lessons learned are being examined and placed before the United Nations system and before Member States; and the calls to action — to factor women into the peace and security equation in new ways — are loud and becoming louder.

The question is: how do we, how should we, heed them?

Australia believes there are a number of practical steps that can be taken. We are applying these in our own development assistance programmes, in our region in particular. I do not want to take the time of the Council to go into details here, but we would be happy to share our experience in programmes in Bougainville, Solomon Islands and East Timor, which have been designed to support the role of women in peace processes, all the while operating alongside other programmes to empower women and to provide greater protection for them in situations of armed conflict.

But beyond our national efforts, we want to see a more deliberate and concentrated effort at the regional and international levels to increase women's participation in peacemaking and peace-building operations. At the very top of the spectrum, renewed attention should be given to the consideration of qualified women for appointment as special representatives and deputy special representatives of the Secretary-General and as senior field staff for peace support operations. This requires effort on the part of the United Nations and Member States to identify suitably skilled and qualified women, both those already within the United Nations system and those from outside, for leadership positions. Partly as a result of the initiative taken by the women Permanent Representatives described earlier today by Ambassador Claudia Fritsche of Liechtenstein and partly because the United Nations Secretariat wants to update its database, my Government has just completed a lengthy and intensive exercise to do just that: identify suitably qualified women. We hope that other Governments will do likewise.

In addition to identifying suitable women for these specialist tasks, or I might call them trouble-shooting tasks, we should all be working to place more women generally in the international legal system — in the Tribunals, in the courts, in the International Law Commission, which I understand has never had a single woman serve on it in its 50-year history. What sort of message does that send about women's participation? We should also be thinking now and preparing actively to be ready to meet the requirement of the Statute of the International Criminal Court (A/CONF.183/9). Perhaps not everybody has read the fine print and is aware that article 36, paragraph 8, imposes on States parties an obligation to take into account, when selecting Judges, the need for a "fair representation of female and male judges" within the membership of the Court. This requirement is also found in the associated article concerning the staff of the Prosecutor's Office and the Registry. The inclusion of these gender provisions, specifying the need for qualified women to be employed in all organs of the Court, grew in part from the United Nations experience with the two special Tribunals and the report produced by the Secretary-General that accompanied the Statute of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

Finally, just on the areas where we might particularly focus, there is a new and growing emphasis, which we are all aware of, in the United Nations peace and security operations on the role of civilian police. Here too there is very real scope to consider and to incorporate a gender perspective. It is obvious that we need more sensitive and more sophisticated resources for gathering evidence, interviewing victims, counselling traumatized persons and interacting with communities in post-conflict situations. Recruitment and training should give appropriate attention to involving women in all these areas.

I said at the outset that I felt that this was an important debate. It gives much-needed impetus to a clear trend towards greater involvement of women in managing conflict and in peace processes. Australia hopes that it will result in a renewed determination on the part of both the United Nations and its Member States to take the practical steps necessary to make this happen. Frankly, they are all within reach, but they need a good push: not just from Angela King, not just from Noeleen Heyzer and the United Nations Development Fund for Women, whose thoughtful statements today should have inspired everyone present, but also from individual Member States and from this Council in particular. I have not seen a draft of the resolution that the Council may be planning to adopt, but I hope it will be strong and, above all, that it will be action-oriented and will pick up the practical suggestions that have been put forward today by a number of delegations, such as those listed by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea and more recently by the Ambassador of New Zealand, speaking on behalf of the South Pacific Forum countries. The resolution should help us all not just to talk the talk, but to walk the walk of women's involvement.

Speaking of talk, there is a lot of talk in the United Nations about "smart sanctions". The phrase has taken hold. Let us be smart in other ways by factoring women deliberately and decisively into the peace, security and conflict-prevention and conflict-resolution activities of the United Nations. By doing things differently, we can do them better.

The President: I thank the representative of Australia for her kind words addressed to my delegation.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Croatia. I invite her to take a seat at the Council table and to make her statement.

Ms. Grčić Polić (Croatia): It is my pleasure to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this open debate on women and peace and security. Indeed, Sir, you should be commended for using your presidency to bring to the spotlight the issue that often lies at the core of the success or failure of domestic, regional and international efforts directed at conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building, including post-conflict reconciliation and reconstruction. In view of its participation last May in the adoption of the historic Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations, Namibia's leadership on this issue comes as no surprise. Rather, I see it as a natural extension of your country's well-deserved reputation for fostering gender equality.

Also allow me to join others in welcoming this morning's excellent presentations by Ms. King and Ms. Heyzer. The enthusiastic response from the gallery is proof that they do make a difference.

The principles of gender equality and mainstreaming of gender perspective in all dimensions of societal interaction lie at the core of democratic societies. Without active support for these principles, no society, no institution, including the United Nations, can hope to master the policies of inclusion in general and in the area of peace and security in particular. The maintenance of peace and security requires a contribution not by some or half of the world's population, but by all. Equally important, if such a contribution is skewed and reflects either only men's or only women's masculine or feminine perspectives, it remains seriously impaired. Likewise, if we were, for example, to direct our attention predominantly or exclusively to the impact of conflict and armed conflict on women and girls alone, we would be doing a disservice to the required comprehensive approach to the overall impact of such conflicts. Although that concern remains highly theoretical for the time being, it is from this fundamental premise that the Croatian delegation would like to share its views during today's debate.

At the outset, we would like to recognize the evolving body of policy statements and other contributions made already to today's topic by the Secretary-General, the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the United Nations Development Fund for Women and various other organizations and bodies within the United Nations system. We would also like to recognize a growing body of related actions taken by the Security Council, such as on the protection of civilians and children in armed conflicts, humanitarian assistance to refugees and others in conflict situations, post-conflict peace-building and the reintegration of former combatants.

In the area of United Nations peace operations, we would like to note the pioneering contributions made by the Windhoek Declaration, the Namibia Plan of Action and Ms. Graça Machel's review document on the impact of armed conflict on children and women. We also wish to highlight the final report of the Beijing + 5 conference (A/S-23/10/Rev.1), the Brahimi report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (S/2000/809) and the first follow-on implementation report of the Secretary-General (A/55/502). We are waiting to see the rest.

Nevertheless, so far precious little serious social science research has focused on the issues addressed by the documents I have mentioned, mainly for a lack of recognition of their importance and, hence, of institutional funding. In this regard, we hail the accomplishments of such pioneers as Ms. Colleen Lowe Morna of South Africa, Ms. Louise Olson of Sweden, Professor Judith Hicks Stiehm of the United States of America, Ms. Maggie Patterson of Canada and Colonel Festus Aboagye of Ghana, to name just a few. The staff members of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations Lessons Learned Unit have also made a contribution to the field and will, it is hoped, continue to do so.

So, what have we learned from their research? We have learned that in recent conflicts — from El Salvador to Bosnia and Herzegovina, and from East Timor to Sierra Leone — women and girls are overwhelmingly the principal victims of deliberate rape, maiming, abduction and displacement. We are told that women and children constitute an estimated 80 per cent of all internally displaced persons and refugees. We have also learned that women and girls are treated differently from men and boys as soldiers or ex-soldiers, as prisoners or ex-prisoners, and as survivors of rape and mutilation.

What can we do? The least we can do is impress upon the Security Council to call upon parties to conflicts to take special measures to protect this vulnerable population. Of course, within its prerogatives of determining mandates for peace operations the Security Council can do much more. It can request that special mechanisms be established for reporting on all forms of sexual violence and exploitation of women and can provide adequate resources for the institutionalization of monitoring and enforcement mechanisms for peacekeeping personnel.

Next, the Security Council can, and should, require that all mission staff receive pre-deployment or early post-deployment training in gender sensitivity and mainstreaming. Also, it can ensure that planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration activities, all mine-related activities and public information outreach campaigns takes into account the different needs and different priorities of men and women.

Last but not least, the Security Council must do its utmost to ensure the implementation of existing international humanitarian and human rights law. I wish to recall that it was only after the diabolic record in Bosnia and Herzegovina that rape was recognized as a war crime, and in some instances as a crime against humanity; and that only recently have such crimes as forced pregnancy, detention with intent to impregnate, and sterilization been sanctioned by article 16 of the Statute of the International Criminal Court.

In the post-conflict period, there is also ample space to support local women's peace-building activities and to strengthen their precarious economic situation — including their access to jobs in weak economies with high unemployment rates — and their access to counselling and human rights expertise, to name a few concerns.

Most importantly, if the Security Council were to require the mandatory participation of women in all the implementation mechanisms of peace settlement with a view to their sustained participation in the political, economic and social life in the future, it would drastically increase the prospects for sustainable peace. Needless to say, the same approach applies to conflict prevention, mediation and resolution, where women must be adequately represented at all levels of the policy-making and decision-making process.

Of special importance in this regard are the contributions made in United Nations field operations. The efforts and accomplishments of women staff members of such multidimensional peace operations as the United Nations Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES), the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and, especially, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) are absolutely precious because they were instrumental in both conceiving and implementing creative approaches to gender inclusion policies within the host environment, and in gender mainstreaming within the peace operation. As always, the support of the respective special representatives of the Secretary-General and the United Nations Headquarters figured prominently in their prospects for success or failure.

Although in some cases today, and certainly in a perfect world of tomorrow, a special representative's gender should not, and would not, matter, we must recognize the fact that so far very few women have served as personal envoys, representatives or special representatives of the Secretary-General. In fact, unless I am mistaken, today we have no Dame Margarets and no Elizabeth Rehns; no woman is currently heading a United Nations peace operation or serving as a special envoy or special representative of the Secretary-General. Some argue that perhaps no qualified women exist for such posts or other senior posts; others point to an informal roster that suggests otherwise. During her United Nations press conference last June, Mrs. Elizabeth Rehn advanced the following bold proposal: when Member States are submitting candidatures for senior United Nations posts they should always present the Secretary-General with two equally qualified candidates, a man and a woman.

The Security Council has in the past called for women to play an equal part in the maintenance of peace and security; so did the Secretary-General's strategic plan of action. Arguably, more can be done at the international level in concrete practical terms, but the issue also clearly rests with the Member States and their domestic policies. Hence, perhaps a comparative survey of State practices on a set of issues and topics addressed in today's debate would be a useful step towards institutionalizing reporting mechanisms within various areas of women's participation and gender mainstreaming in peace and security matters.

The President: I thank the representative of Croatia for the kind words addressed to my country.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Belarus. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Ling (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The delegation of the Republic of Belarus would like to congratulate you, Sir, the representative of Namibia, on presiding over this meeting of the Security Council. Namibia's contribution to the work of the United Nations this year is indeed greatly appreciated.

The item on our agenda today is rather unusual, but we deeply believe that it touches on the most sensitive aspects of the entire contemporary system of peacekeeping and peace-building in the United Nations. We are happy to see that the Security Council is not beginning its consideration of this important item from scratch. The Council has had very important debates on its role in the maintenance of international peace and security, in disarmament and reintegration of former combatants, and in the area of children in armed conflict — all of which provided a sound basis for our consideration today of women within the scope of the Council's powers and responsibilities in the maintenance of international peace and security.

The Republic of Belarus appreciates the work done in the General Assembly on gender equality and the advancement of women and in involving women more widely in the political, economic and social arenas of life.

We believe that there is a very close link between those endeavours and the work of the Security Council, the principal organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, as it considers the so-called women's issue in the context of armed conflicts — which directly involve women and from which they suffer more than anybody else.

The Security Council statement issued on International Women's Day this year stressed that women's interests had to be fully taken into account and that women had to enabled to participate in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and crises. We believe that it is important for the Council to take the proper action to protect women, who constitute the most vulnerable group within the civilian population. That is no easy matter in today's conflicts, which are primarily internal conflicts and which involve a wide range of political, socio-economic, cultural and other social issues.

Hence, it is very important to ensure that Council resolutions and peacekeeping mandates contain specific provisions relating to the provision of protection and assistance to girls and women. It is also very important that there be a reliable mechanism to ensure that all those who violates the norms of humanitarian law are held to account.

Belarus believes that United Nations activities on gender issues have been of particular significance this year. They have included the June special session of the General Assembly devoted to women's issues, as well as today's Security Council deliberations. Together, these will define the future approach to the Organization's consideration of women's issues to ensure peace and security.

The Republic of Belarus attaches great importance to gender issues, and is fully determined to make its contribution to those endeavours.

The President: I thank the representative of Belarus for the kind words he addressed to my country.

A number of speakers remain on my list. In view of the lateness of the hour, and with the concurrence of the members of the Security Council, I intend to suspend the meeting now, and to resume it tomorrow, Wednesday, 25 October 2000, at 10.30 a.m.

The meeting was suspended at 6.25 p.m.

Security Council

Fifty-fifth year

Provisional

4208th meeting

Wednesday, 25 October 2000, 10.30 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Andjaba	(Namibia)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Listre
	Bangladesh	Mr. Chowdhury
	Canada	Mr. Heinbecker
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Malaysia	Mr. Hasmy
	Mali	Mr. Kassé
	Netherlands	Mr. Hamer
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Tunisia	Mr. Ben Mustapha
	Ukraine	Mr. Krokhmal
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Grainger
	United States of America	Ms. Soderberg

Agenda

Women and peace and security.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

00-70857 (E)

The meeting was resumed at 10.45 a.m., 25 October 2000.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Ethiopia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Hussein (Ethiopia): I would like to thank you, Sir, for presiding over this very important open debate of the Security Council on the question of women and peace and security. It is true that issues concerning women are dealt with in different forums, especially in the fields of development and human rights. We believe that this open debate of the Security Council — the result of an initiative under your presidency — will also enable us to exchange views on the situation of women in armed conflict, an issue that is within the mandate of the Security Council.

I fully endorse the thrust of Mr. Kofi Annan's opening statement yesterday. I also take this opportunity to welcome the statements of Ms. Angela King and Ms. Noeleen Heyzer for reminding us how far we have yet to go in addressing the perils faced by women during war and also during so-called periods of peace, when many crimes are often committed, too. It is not just periods of conflict that we must consider.

The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and other United Nations agencies, such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), must be commended for their direct support for women in conflict situations and for their work in bringing women's voices to national, regional and international decision-making arenas. In particular, UNIFEM's role in facilitating the All-Party Conference in Arusha and in putting forward Burundian women's recommendations for the final peace agreement, highlights their innovative and unique approach.

More specifically, Ethiopia believes that a full-scale assessment of the impact of armed conflict on women and of women's role in peace-building is long overdue. We hope the Council will recommend such a follow-up to today's debate. We have full confidence in UNIFEM's ability to support this process, drawing on other United Nations funds and programmes and the important work of civil society.

We are not short on knowledge of where we are deficient in fully meeting the rights of women in all their aspects. Therefore, I will not repeat what others eloquently stated yesterday better than I could. Most States, including mine, have legislated for equality between men and women. Yet, if we look at the very parliaments and legislatures that did that, we will see that equality between men and women is lacking.

Recently, we held the second multi-party elections in my country. Twenty million people voted, of which half were women. Yet, only 10 per cent of the 540 members of parliament elected were women, despite the fact that in some electoral districts 80 per cent of the voters were women. In the previous parliament, women constituted only one per cent of its membership. In the executive branch, the situation is relatively better, but much has yet to be done. This will require continuous but determined efforts by both women themselves and men who genuinely believe in equality between men and women.

Equality will not drop from the sky — one must strive to achieve it. Over the years, and especially under Mr. Kofi Annan, the United Nations has made considerable progress in this area. In a few agencies, the number of women in senior positions surpassed 30 per cent some years ago. In two or more, 50 per cent has been achieved. Hence, while more can and should be done, it is time that we, the Member States, including mine, follow the example set by our world Organization. Perhaps the best place for the Member States to start is in this chamber. Perhaps we can let the countries of the Permanent Five set the example by sending women as their representatives. Some may say there might be too many of them, but we have had too many men for over five decades. So it will not hurt if we start with the next lot of Permanent Representatives. The rest of us should not be far behind. For my part, I will strive for my successor to be a woman Permanent Representative as soon as possible.

I say this because, if we do not have women represented in sufficient and equitable number at all levels — all levels — of society, then no amount of wisdom-filled statements in the General Assembly chamber or elsewhere will bring peace and security to women in particular and humankind in general. For our part, we in Ethiopia are committed to pursuing diligently the small gains we have made and will build on them. Globally, too, we can all do it.

In the spirit of the Millennium Summit, let us talk less and act more, since we say we know what needs to be done. In this context, I share completely what Ambassador Penny Wensley of Australia said in her concluding remarks late yesterday afternoon.

The President: I thank the representative of Ethiopia for his kind words addressed to my delegation.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Malawi, whom I invite to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Juwayeyi (Malawi): Those of us who are not in the Security Council do not get an opportunity to congratulate a delegation for assuming the presidency of the Council, so it gives me particular pleasure this morning to congratulate you, Mr. President, and I am most grateful that during your presidency you have taken the initiative to hold this open session on women and peace and security.

My Government attaches great importance to the protection and security of women and girls, both in situations of armed conflict and in peace. Wars and armed conflict bring untold suffering and misery to communities and nations, for they entail devastating and horrific levels of violence and brutality, employing any possible means. Today's wars and conflicts make little distinction between soldiers and civilians and between adults and children. Currently, most of the wars and conflicts take place in developing countries, where most of the population lives in rural areas. Often, these conflicts are within countries, rather than across borders. Women and children constitute a disproportionate number of the affected populations and, therefore, suffer the brunt of violence and brutality.

Armed conflict affects women and girls differently from men and boys. During armed conflict, not only are women and girls killed, maimed, abducted, separated from their loved ones, subjected to starvation, malnutrition and forced displacement, but they are also continually threatened with rape, domestic violence, sexual exploitation and slavery, trafficking, sexual humiliation and mutilation. Rape and sexual violence perpetrated by the armed forces, whether governmental or other actors, including in some instances peacekeeping personnel, increases the potential for spreading HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. No wonder most of the HIV/AIDS victims in the developing countries are women and girls. HIV/AIDS leaves millions of children orphaned and, in most cases, the responsibility to care for them rests largely on the shoulders of older people.

All of these harmful and widespread threats to women and girls have long-term consequences for durable peace, security and development. The sad thing is that in most instances the women do not know why the wars and armed conflicts erupt, owing to the fact that they are either under-represented or not represented at all at the decision-making levels.

My Government applauds and thanks the Secretary-General, the United Nations bodies and agencies, non-governmental organizations, international agencies and donor countries for the efforts they have made to protect and secure peace and security for women and girls. Various international legal instruments, particularly the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the corresponding Optional Protocols, have been adopted by the General Assembly. International Criminal Tribunals have been established for the former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda, and these have made great strides to help end impunity for crimes against women and girls. Forms of sexual violence are now included as a war crime in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Beyond its emergency relief responsibilities, the United Nations has increasingly become involved in efforts aimed at peacekeeping, peace-making and peace-building. It is gratifying to note that the Security Council, even though it has taken five decades to do so, has now recognized the importance of women's role and of their increased participation in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building.

However, there is still a lot more that needs to be done. Appropriate solutions cannot be achieved if women are left out of the decision-making machinery. You are aware, Mr. President, that women continue to be under-represented in all peacekeeping, peace-making and peace-building efforts, including in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in the United Nations. This should not be allowed to continue.

In the long term however, the only way to truly ensure the protection and security of women and girls is to prevent wars and armed conflicts from taking

place. Major root causes of most of the recent wars and armed conflicts have included poverty and lack of respect for human rights. These ills must be addressed first. My delegation recalls that, at the end of the Millennium Summit, world leaders pledged to eradicate poverty and make the right to development a reality for everyone. This means promoting equality between men and women in decision-making. This further means the involvement and full participation of women in all issues, including peacekeeping, peacemaking and peace-building, as well as at the negotiating table, from the grassroots level to the decision-making levels.

My delegation requests the Secretary-General and the Security Council to urge Member States to ensure that training in human rights and peacekeeping, peacemaking and peace-building includes everyone — civilians, soldiers, the police, civil society, the women themselves and peacekeeping personnel. Those who commit crimes against women, including the peacekeeping personnel, should be brought to book.

Let us heed the women's cry for an equal opportunity to voice their ideas in official peace negotiations. And let us act now.

The President: I thank the representative of Malawi for his kind words addressed to my delegation.

The next speaker is the representative of Guatemala. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank you, Sir, for having convened this meeting, and I would like to thank the Secretary-General, Angela King and Noeleen Heyzer for the lucid statements they made yesterday.

Guatemala could not help but participate in a debate on women and peace and security. In fact, an important leader of my country's non-governmental-organization community, Ms. Luz Méndez, participated in the closed session the day before yesterday at which the Security Council listened to diverse representatives of non-governmental organizations who spoke on this subject.

Indeed, as everyone here knows, in December 1996, under the aegis of the United Nations and a group of friendly countries, the two parties that had been battling one another during four decades of fratricidal conflict put an end to this conflict by signing a set of peace agreements. These accords endeavour to address the major problems that were at the root of the conflict. These problems include poverty, marginalization, discrimination and a lack of participation. The issue of the status of women and their participation in the economic and social development of the country appears throughout these agreements as both a goal and a commitment.

By way of introduction, the tremendous restrictions under which Guatemalan women have lived since time immemorial could be mentioned. The majority of the population lives in poverty. Women, and especially those who are heads of households, are among the most vulnerable members of the population. Such women — and especially indigenous women living in rural areas — have the highest levels of illiteracy. Women have had to face particular obstacles, including marginalization, a lack of opportunities, discrimination and violence. This situation was aggravated by the consequences of the internal armed conflict, which brought with it death, disappearances, uprooting and all types of hardships. Many families were forced to leave their places of residence to seek refuge in neighbouring countries or in regions of the country far removed from the combat zones. The number of widows and women heads of household increased enormously.

For all of these reasons, when peace was agreed upon, many Guatemalan women found themselves in a situation of grave economic hardship and social vulnerability. A broad and negotiated process of reconciliation, resettlement and cooperation was necessary, as was the healing of the deep physical and psychological wounds of the war.

During the almost five years that have passed since the signing of the Agreement on a Firm and Lasting Peace progress has been made. This includes the return and resettlement of displaced people, the downsizing of the army, progress in the reform of the judicial and educational systems and the establishment of mechanisms to facilitate access to land. Furthermore, specific measures were adopted to study and analyse the situation of women and to design strategies to improve it. This has been the role of the women's forum and has led to the establishment of the office of the advocate for indigenous women. In more general terms, Guatemala today is a more open, more plural and more participatory society than it was five years ago. At the same time, there is much greater

public awareness than before about the need to deal with injustice and inequity and to achieve deep structural reforms, in both the economic and social spheres, which are indispensable to bring about sustainable peace.

In real terms, in recent years the participation of women has grown in many fields. An increase in the number of women involved in training programmes and in community affairs can be seen. Women have greater access to leadership positions and are taking greater part in the electoral processes, as well as in political and entrepreneurial activities, and not a few now hold prominent positions in the country.

At the same time, a great deal remains to be done. As Ms. Méndez pointed out the day before yesterday, many of the commitments contained in the peace agreements have not been fulfilled in the quick and timely manner originally envisioned. It is obvious that we are still far from achieving the goal contained in the agreements — that is, to promote and effectively facilitate the involvement of women in all areas of life, at all levels, without discrimination of any kind. Perhaps the complexity of what would follow was not adequately foreseen, especially because the original timetable of four years proved to be insufficient to deal with the accumulation of the difficulties that we faced. For this reason the oversight commission of the peace process recently rescheduled compliance with the commitments. Also for this reason, we hope that the mandate of the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala will be extended to the end of 2003.

In conclusion, Guatemala has important experiences to contribute to this discussion. I endorse vigorously the recommendations that Ms. Méndez presented the day before yesterday on the lessons that have been learned from these experiences — lessons that can be useful for other Member States of this Organization.

The President: I thank the representative of Guatemala for his kind words addressed to my delegation.

The next speaker is the representative of the United Arab Emirates. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Samhan (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I wish to express our gratitude to you, Sir, for your efforts to strengthen the role of women in the sphere of international peace and security. We support the statements made by Ms. King and Ms. Heyzer, which reflect the international community's concerns about the advancement of women in the area of peace, security and sustainable development.

In recent decades, women in many States throughout the world, the United Nations, its specialized agencies and regional and international organizations have been assigned important posts. They have played a leading role equal to that of men in reconstruction and in economic, social, cultural and human development. They have demonstrated sufficient scientific and technical knowledge and competence to allow them to adapt to events and developments in their societies and the world at large.

However, despite all the regional and international conferences that have been held on the topic of women in the past two decades, which have addressed all the problems and attempted to meet all the challenges that have been encountered in seeking to enhance women's participation at the national, regional and international levels, the role of women in the maintenance of international peace and security still falls short of our aspirations for contemporary international relations. These various developments have highlighted the gravity of the situation of women, who suffer from racial discrimination, ethnic cleansing, rape, forced displacement and other phenomena, particularly in countries where war, internal conflict and occupation continue to rage. Furthermore, the imbalances in economic and social relations between the developed and the developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, have their own negative impact. These phenomena have aggravated illiteracy and poverty, which in turn have increased the suffering of women and children.

If this situation persists, particularly in regions of Africa, Asia and the Middle East that still labour under the yoke of occupation and war, it will present enormous challenges to the international community. This requires the Security Council to follow up the implementation of its resolutions on these various conflicts. The Council must coordinate its work with international, national and regional organizations and agencies in order to find peaceful solutions to these conflicts as soon as possible. Without such a commitment, the people of those States — especially women and children — will continue to suffer the

effects of instability and insecurity, which in turn fuel violence, extremism and frustration.

The United Arab Emirates has closely followed the situation in the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories, which has experienced a serious exacerbation of violence and aggression, including the Israeli blockade against the Palestinian people, in which women and children suffer the most. My country deplores this situation and calls on Israel to end its massive violations of human rights in the Palestinian territories. For the fourth week running, the international press has been broadcasting images and reports highlighting these criminal abuses and violations. I refer in particular to the Palestinian mother who was killed in the presence of her nine children. Another woman, old and infirm, who was merely trying to get to her workplace, was also gunned down. Furthermore, an unprecedented number of Palestinians have died or been wounded.

These examples speak volumes about the serious human rights violations being committed by the Israeli forces, particularly against women and children. The persistence of this situation demonstrates that certain States of the international community use double standards in their approach to these events. The international community has rejected such behaviour through resolutions recently adopted by the Security Council and the General Assembly. Israel's actions run counter to the letter and spirit of the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention, to international humanitarian law and norms, and to the primacy of respect for international law.

We therefore demand that an independent, neutral commission of inquiry be established and that an international criminal tribunal be set up, on the model of those already created by the Security Council, to prosecute and try the perpetrators of the crimes committed against the Palestinian people, in particular Palestinian women and children. This international mechanism of deterrence could help to limit the growing violence and the serious violations of the fundamental human rights of women and children.

In conclusion, the United Arab Emirates believes that the acts of violence and massive violations of the human rights of powerless innocent civilians, particularly women and children, are creating abnormal conditions of bloodshed, oppression, inequality and racial and religious discrimination. We therefore stress the importance of disseminating a culture of peace, respect for the basic international norms and standards for the treatment of women, and the legitimate rights guaranteed by religions and national and international laws and norms.

We also believe in the vanguard role that women can play in international affairs, especially in the area of economic, social and human development. The participation of women should be guaranteed in international decision-making and in peacekeeping operations in order to ensure security, stability and sustainable development at the regional, national and international levels.

The President: I thank the representative of the United Arab Emirates for his kind words addressed to my delegation.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Norway. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Hønningstad (Norway): Let me start by expressing my thanks to the Namibian presidency for the initiative to hold this open meeting on women and peace and security. Norway appreciates that these topics are being discussed in the Security Council. We are also grateful for the excellent introductions that we heard yesterday and for the many thoughtful and in-depth interventions that we have had on this very import topic. In view of that, I take the liberty of shortening by a little my intervention, the text of which has been distributed.

A sustainable political process and the enhancement of democracy require full participation of women. Peace and the avoidance of armed conflict are inextricably linked to equality between women and men and to development.

Women do not yet have the opportunity to participate on an equal basis with men in all areas and at all levels of public life, especially in decision-making and policy-making. This is true also with regard to peace-building, peacemaking and conflict resolution activities. At the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, in June this year, "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", the topic of women and peace and security was among the areas in which it was agreed that a strengthening of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was

needed. In this respect, I take the liberty of referring to Ambassador Wensley of Australia's excellent intervention yesterday on the problem of gender balance and equality in the United Nations system. Definitely much can be done there, and she had some bright ideas in that respect.

There is now wider recognition that armed conflict has different destructive impacts on women and men and that a gender-sensitive approach to the application of international human rights law and international humanitarian law is important. Women's contributions in the areas of peace-building, peacemaking and conflict resolution have been increasingly recognized. Education and training in non-violent conflict resolution have been introduced. There is also greater recognition of the need to integrate a gender perspective in the planning, design and implementation of humanitarian assistance and to provide adequate resources to make this possible. Humanitarian relief agencies and civil society continue to play an increasingly important role in the provision of humanitarian assistance, including programmes to address the needs of women and girls.

I would like to take this opportunity to announce that Norway will host an expert seminar on the situation of women in refugee camps early next year.

In the Brahimi report (S/2000/809), the gender issues are in our view not sufficiently covered. There is a need for a clearer focus on the role of women as a resource in the planning and implementation of peace processes. Also, the report does not say enough about the potential positive role of women and the impact of conflict on women and girls. It is therefore of utmost importance that the gender perspective should be strengthened in the follow-up to the report. We have for too long seen women as victims only. Women represent a resource that we cannot afford to ignore. The report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Brahimi report seems to be a step in the right direction in this respect.

In June this year, a Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations was adopted in Windhoek, Namibia. We view this plan as a good start for putting commitments already made by the United Nations into practice. Ms. Graça Machel's review document dealing with the impact of armed conflict on children and women is also seen as an important contribution.

Norway has commissioned a study on women soldiers in post-conflict situations. We know that a number of women participate actively in armed conflict, both as combatants and support staff. We need to know more about their role after the conflict, the problems they encounter and how their competence can be used in a constructive manner in a post-conflict situation.

In conclusion, Norway will continue to be committed to the issue of women and peace and security. We must strive for full implementation of gender mainstreaming in all activities. Political will is the key, and it is our responsibility to see that we achieve these goals.

The President: I thank the representative of Norway for his kind words addressed to my delegation.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Rwanda. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Mutaboba (Rwanda): My delegation joins others in congratulating you, Mr. President, on calling this debate on women and peace and security. We also appreciate statements made earlier by Ms. Angela King and Ms. Noeleen Heyzer. On this subject we are happy to share the thoughts of the President of the Republic of Rwanda, Mr. Paul Kagame, and all the members of the Cabinet, especially the Minister for Gender and Women in Development, who all strongly speak out in favour of empowering women for durable peace and sustainable development. Peace is a prerequisite for sustainable development, and women have a lot to offer.

In most African traditional societies and modern societies throughout the world, solidarity with one another has been the best chance for peace and security. Such solidarity is gradually shaped and built from the early days of our lives, and we owe this acquisition to mothers — and fathers of course — whoever we may be and wherever we may be from. The focal point for all family life is the wife, the mother, the "she citizen" of the world. Unfortunately, what she offers and gives is not always what she gets in return when wars and calamities break out. The time is right for her to have a say in this at all levels and in all institutions.

All hardships and abuses befall her, but she never gives up. Stories from Rwanda teach us all that when political and ethnic tensions cause conflict, women have come as one to suggest building bridges rather than walls. The Security Council has done well, but it could do better; it can help women in knocking walls down and building bridges between people and cultures. In post-genocide Rwanda, women still carry the burden of responsibility and caring for their children, orphans, the elderly and husbands in prisons. Women have assumed the entire role of breadwinners and are shouldering multiple challenges despite the fact that 54 per cent are illiterate, and the majority of them live below the poverty line.

Those who made women widows in Rwanda, in Burundi and in the Balkans and those who raped them and left them with infections, diseases and consequences of all sorts, including unwanted pregnancies and HIV/AIDS, are still at large and active. They are killing and raping more women and girls across borders, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in Burundi and elsewhere, under the silence of many who, contrariwise, should arrest them according to several Security Council resolutions and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide that we all signed. Instead, these criminals curiously still enjoy the world's attention, especially those in Arusha and in Rwanda's prisons or in big cities of the world. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, they cease to be what they are — meaning criminals, rapists and killers — the day they agree to join the ranks of the Kabila forces and his allies, who are creating more havoc when peace and security are at stake. And this body seems powerless to take timely and decisive action.

Adding insult to injury, the agony is still not over for those women who were victims of rape as a weapon of genocide. As witnesses at the International Tribunal for Rwanda in Arusha, they are indeed compelled to tell their stories in an all-male environment — the judges, the interpreters and everyone else are all men. More attention should be drawn to this situation and it should be swiftly addressed by the Council if peace and security are for all, including women victims of rape as a weapon of genocide. Let competent women — and there are many — be recruited and do the job. We cannot accept double standards even if we have to live with them.

My delegation reiterates that the presence of such criminals in the Democratic Republic of the Congo continues to be a threat to the security of our people and to our sovereignty. Rwanda is in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to stop them from killing and raping more innocent women, girls and children. Rwanda is there to get them and many of those taken hostages back. It does so within the framework of the Lusaka Agreement framework, as negotiated and agreed by all parties, welcomed by the Council and, thus far, not changed by any United Nations resolution, as wrongly stated by the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In September alone — in one month — we were blessed to get back to Rwanda from the Democratic Republic of the Congo 17,000 of our people — women, children and men. And we will continue to get them back to where they belong, within the law. The international community should encourage and contribute to this effort as a genuine search for peace and security rather than keeping quiet and dwelling on non-priority issues. We take this opportunity to thank the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the assistance given to us and to the returnees who are being reintegrated into their societies, as over a million others have been since November 1996.

Against this picture of continued inaction by the international community, and this body in particular, as regards the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and the region — although I know efforts are being made — women have come together to form associations nationally and regionally and, with the assistance of our Government, have established women's councils and have elected representatives from villages to the national level for the first time ever in the history of Rwanda. Peace-building is high on the agenda of women in their various development activities. We encourage them to continue because they are right and because it is the right thing to do. Women have indeed understood that there is no possible development activity if there is no peace at home and across our borders. Peace and security are the prime responsibility of this body, and women have a right to be involved, especially where we men have failed. They have proved they can do it. Let us involve them and empower them.

Namibia has done a great job in promoting advocacy for women, and we once again congratulate Namibia and its leadership. Rwanda, on her part, has

hosted two international conferences on women and peace. The first one, the Pan-African Conference of Peace, Gender and Development, was organized in March 1997, and the Kigali Declaration was adopted under the auspices of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The second one, which took place in June, was entitled Women as Partners for Peace. It was organized by the current Ambassador of the United States to Rwanda and his extended team, to whom we express our sincere thanks and congratulations. The conclusions and recommendations of all these conferences whether in Kampala, Dakar, Johannesburg, Kigali or Windhoek, should be translated into action to make sure that women get what they deserve and on time.

In a bid to promote peace and security, Rwandan women have undertaken various other important activities that are worth mentioning and from which we could learn. First, a programme called Action Campaign for Peace was launched by Pro-Femme Twese Hamwe, an umbrella organization that brings together Rwandan women's non-governmental organizations. Secondly, a peace village was built by the Rwandan Women's Alliance and Solidarity (AVOSERWA), which supports genocide widows; the village is dedicated to and named after the former President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela. Thirdly, because of such peace initiatives the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization awarded Rwandan women a prize for peace and tolerance in 1997. Fourthly, in a bid to contribute in the area of resolving conflicts and promoting peace in the region, Rwanda hosted the international conference to which I referred earlier, under the auspices of the OAU and the Economic Commission for Africa.

This Rwandan experience and many others in the region and beyond speak to the Council and should be given attention. In the search for peace and security for all, one of the best strategies for conflict prevention is to extend the role of women as peacemakers from the village council in the hinterland of any given country Member of this Organization, to this very Chamber where peace and security are supposed to be ensured for all, without any distinction. The distance to be covered seems too long, but we are sure to reach the final objective if we empower women and take them on board.

As rightly expressed in Africa by President Kagame on 25 June 2000, when opening the conference entitled Women as Partners for Peace,

> "The twentieth century failed to acknowledge the role of women in conflict resolution and the search for peace. Yet everybody knows that when there is war, the heaviest toll falls on women and children. It is now time to bridge this gap because without the involvement of our mothers, sisters and daughters within and outside our borders, we cannot find lasting peace. For a long time, women have been relegated to the periphery of political activities. Governments have to put in place policy instruments and institutions which will enable women to play an important role in the area of peace, reconciliation and conflict resolution ... It is not only wars that undermine peace. Human rights abuses, social injustice, poverty and bad governance are some of the factors that should be examined in order to tackle conflict on several fronts."

In conclusion, the Rwanda Government's commitment to increase the participation of women in creating and promoting peace should guide the Council and its membership to adequately address the issue of peace and security by involving women. They have experiences to share and a clear, strong will to destroy all myths and prejudices around and against them. The Council needs to be gender-sensitive as many of us here have become, but also, and especially, needs to act to bring women to the negotiating table in order to help us to reach the lasting peace and security for which we long.

The President: The next speaker on my list is the representative of Botswana. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Mmualefe (Botswana): My delegation is grateful to you, Mr. President, for your timely initiative, and to the Security Council not only for recognizing the various factors that relate to women and peace and security, but for emphasizing the importance of women's increased participation in all aspects of the process of conflict prevention and resolution. Among the several documents before us, Security Council document S/PRST/2000/25 particularly attests to this fact. Also, the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995,

contributed in no small measure to focusing the world's attention on the agenda of women, peace and security. We also thank the various United Nations bodies that continue to highlight the subject of women, peace and security. In particular, we extend our thanks to the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, Ms. King, and the Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, Ms. Heyzer, for their valuable interventions yesterday and the work they continue to do in this area.

Unfortunately, violence against women is still the norm in some parts of the world. There is definitely a need to strengthen or enact legislation to censure or punish domestic violence, including the sexual abuse of women and girls.

In cases of peace operations, violations against women must not be tolerated. They must be punished. Peace support operations must include well-staffed and integrated gender units and gender advisers. It should not be forgotten that gender inequality, discrimination and violence affect women more than men. Field operations should therefore pay particular attention to affected women, especially refugee women and girls.

In the case of Botswana, it is generally understood and slowly being accepted that violence against women, in particular domestic violence, is not a family matter but a serious crime. Laws are therefore expected to change to punish this crime. In 1997 there was a review of all Botswana laws that discriminate against women.

In war and conflict situations, the under-representation of women in decision-making at all levels is one of the major problems. In most cases, the very men who make war or who take part in war make decisions related to conflicts, and yet it is women who have to take care of the war victims, both emotionally and physically. For women to contribute effectively to the maintenance of peace and security, their economic and political empowerment is very crucial. This fact is well illustrated in the Windhoek Declaration, which was adopted during the commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group in Namibia on 31 May 2000.

Botswana recognizes that the participation of women in decision-making at all levels of private and public life is an important human rights issue. In trying to strengthen the link between politics and human rights, Botswana has consistently expended efforts towards gender-neutral education, including political education, mobilization, lobbying and advocacy. Non-governmental organizations have played a contributory role here.

Whenever the issue of women, peace and security is discussed, the painful topic of children in armed conflict, children who are routinely subjected to gang rape, ethnic cleansing and genocide, cannot be overlooked. In this regard, we commend the 1996 Machel report, which clearly demonstrated that the full impact of armed conflict on children can be fully understood only when associated with or examined in the context of the effects it has on women, families and communities.

I cannot end my statement without touching on the area of women and health. In Botswana, there are some hurdles pertaining mainly to negative cultural customs and traditions that need to be relegated to the past. The Government, non-governmental organizations and civil society have continued to make efforts to address these problems. Currently, the main issue of great concern is the HIV/AIDS pandemic, which, as in most African countries, is devastating our country, targeting mostly women. The United Nations, United Nations bodies and the international community are called upon to aggressively address the HIV/AIDS problem in Africa and elsewhere, including in areas of armed conflict.

In conclusion, it is the responsibility of each and every one of us to increase public awareness of the positive role played by gender mainstreaming in peace and security matters.

The President: I thank the representative of Botswana for his kind words addressed to my delegation.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Nepal. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Bhattarai (Nepal): At the outset, I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this open debate on women and peace and security. This topical issue needs greater thrust in a conflict-ridden world.

We appreciate the opening statement of Secretary-General Kofi Annan, as well as the presentations by Assistant Secretary-General Angela King and the Executive Director of the United Nations

Development Fund for Women, Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, before the Council.

In our culture, women are the source of strength. An old verse in Sanskrit maintains that God takes his abode where women enjoy respect. Without casting any aspersions on fellow men, let me say that women make more compassionate and often more effective leaders. They go to the root of the problem when they have to address it.

Let me cite an example. A few years ago, in some remote parts of Nepal women stood up to rectify a social and economic malady. In those poverty-stricken areas, men would squander their meagre incomes on drinking. They would come home inebriated, touch off a row and beat up their wives and children in drunken stupor.

Tired of this, women pressed the Government to declare those areas dry zones. Once there was no liquor to drink, men shared chores more, household violence declined, families had better food as their incomes were properly used and children were spared gratuitous exposure to alcohol and violence. Controlling the booze was hard to sustain in a male-dominated world, but it worked.

Many studies have established that women tend to be more sincere, reliable and compassionate; they also tend to make prudent use of their resources. Nepal's microcredit programme reveals that women default on their loans less, their earnings are used to meet the family needs more and their repayment rate is higher than that of their male counterparts.

In conflict situations women become the victims of outrage and violence. They are harassed, abused, maimed, mutilated, raped, compelled to bear the stigma of outrage or even killed. They frequently witness horrendous abuse meted out to their children. They know the pain of losing their husbands and sons to war. They know first-hand where the shoe pinches. Men may even subconsciously wish for the excitement of adventure that conflicts present. Women are more likely to shun violence more consistently. For those reasons, and more, women are likely to be more committed to resolving disputes more peacefully than men are.

Women constitute more than 50 per cent of the global population. Conflicts make more women and children victims than men. Women have been able to do most of the things men have, from scaling Mount Everest to running a country. Still women are seldom at the forefront of resolving disputes, preventing conflicts and keeping peace. They are yet to attain equality and find their proper place in society. This has to change.

Change is something we have already agreed to make. The United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and a number of other conventions, including those on humanitarian law, have already drawn up the blueprint. All we need to do is to implement those provisions in real life to let women enjoy equality in all walks of life, and let them apply their ingenuity to solve the world's problems.

We see three distinct roles for women in the area of peace and security in the context of the United Nations. First, the United Nations must work to empower women around the world by encouraging equality and the implementation of human rights provisions already agreed upon. Secondly, more women must be sent out to the field as peacekeepers and peace-makers than has been the case so far. They can then have a better feel for realities on the ground and can bring that experience to formulating informed strategies for a durable peace. Thirdly, we must have more women in the United Nations system, especially at the policy level. They will bring their compassion and a fresh outlook to their work. They are likely to put conflicts in proper perspective, try to look into problems in their entirety, and fashion solutions in a holistic manner.

A word of caution is in order here, though. Women must work hard to bridge the gap and catch up. They should do more to acquire skills and a competitive edge. They ought to strive for their own empowerment. Generous pledges of equality will not bear fruit unless women take the initiative to excel and lead the change. A gender-based quota as a quick fix makes sense. But, at the end of the day, it is the quality that sustains the gains of women, not the quota.

As women are superior in caring, providing, loving and balancing in everyday life, let them also use their skills, warmth, caution and compassion to promote peace and security to this strife-stricken world. If they can bring peace in their homes and villages, they can do it in their countries and in the

world. Partnership between men and women is sure to bring tremendous synergy.

To conclude, we believe that women can make a difference if they have the opportunity to do so. Therefore, let the mothers and sisters of the world be authors of peace and security in the new century.

The President: I thank the representative of Nepal for his kind words addressed to my delegation.

I shall now make a statement as the representative of Namibia, and on behalf of my Minister, who, due to other equally important engagements, is not able to be with us this morning.

Let me begin by expressing my hearty congratulations to the Secretary-General on his personal participation in this debate and his important statement. We are proud of him and fully support his leadership in this and other worthy endeavours.

The Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, Ms. Angela King, made a constructive contribution in this meeting, and I thank her for her outstanding work. The preparations for the meeting would not have been successful without the cooperation and advice of the United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM). I thank Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, its Executive Director, for her dedication. The continuing efforts being made by UNIFEM to assist women's peace activities at the grassroots level are greatly appreciated by all. These two distinguished United Nations officials have brought to the table unique perspectives, factual accounts and practical proposals for action. My thanks also go to all the agencies for their contributions and support.

This open debate is the first of its kind convened by the Council. It is a good omen that it is taking place on United Nations Day in the year 2000. Fifty-five years ago today the Charter of the United Nations came into being. Yet it has taken the international community many decades to recognize that women are among the principal victims of war, conflict and insecurity. They must thus be treated as indispensable partners in the maintenance of international peace and security. Today's meeting therefore constitutes a new and significant beginning for the Security Council; the Council should conscientiously make use of the contributions women can make in dealing with the issues of preventive diplomacy, conflict prevention, protection of women and girls in armed conflict and peace-making, peacekeeping and support operations.

The video images we all saw at the beginning of this meeting tell the full story and its implications. No one can deny the fact that women shoulder the heavy burden of sustaining embattled societies, while attending to traumas, miseries and violence during armed conflicts. Regrettably, peace negotiations are habitually male-dominated, the result being under-utilization of the capabilities of women in conflict prevention, resolution and settlement and a wilful disregard of their concerns.

Armed conflict affects women in special ways. Women demonstrate this time and again, but apparently to no avail. They are among the first civilians to become refugees or internally displaced persons. Nonetheless, they are the ones who are expected to look after children left in a state of despair and suffering. Women assume the responsibility of picking up the pieces, bringing together family life and promoting social harmony in the aftermath of war. However, there are no special measures aimed at assisting them during and after armed conflict. The impact of warfare and death on children requires purposeful attention, as do — to no less a degree — the related negative effects on women. In particular, as we are reviewing United Nations peace operations, we need to have a better understanding of the impact of conflict on women and girls in order to ensure adequate provision for their safety and protection.

As regards children, Security Council resolution 1261 (1999), adopted on 25 August 1999, among other things,

> "Urges States and all relevant parts of the United Nations system to intensify their efforts to ensure an end to the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict in violation of international law through political and other efforts, including promotion of the availability of alternatives for children to their participation in armed conflict". (*para. 13*)

Doing that will lessen the burden of mothers and of other women. May I express here a word of gratitude to the Jamaican presidency during the month of July for pushing that heart-wrenching issue a step further into the limelight.

Never before has the necessity for equal participation by women at the peace table been felt more keenly than it is today. During the special session of the General Assembly to review the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, this issue was repeatedly emphasized, and urgent calls were made for world peace and for an end to armed conflict and human suffering. Those cries for peace and human security still resonate. We must listen to women and engage them in the search for lasting solutions. Women have the right to participate in aspects of peace processes, peace negotiations and the implementation of agreements as well as in post-conflict monitoring, peace enforcement and reconstruction.

Gender-based violence against women and girls is widely recorded, and calls out for an international awareness campaign to put a complete end to it. Namibia welcomes the suggestion that the United Nations maintain an open roster of qualified women for recruitment and deployment in key positions in the system. Women constitute half of the population, and possess half of the world's brain-power and experience.

For this to begin to happen, mindsets, especially those of men, must change and must give way to new thinking and to a new beginning for the United Nations in the field of conflict resolution and peacekeeping. Now is the time to move away from perceiving women only as victims of conflict and to see them also, and more importantly, as equal participants in securing peace and security in the world.

In conflict situations, violence against women, including rape, is used as a weapon of war in unconscionable violation of women's human rights and dignity. It is timely and imperative that the full force of international humanitarian and human rights law be applied effectively against all culprits.

Namibia supports the strengthening of the capacity of women to participate in all United Nations peace operations and to participate fully in decision-making at all levels. Women should continue to be involved in greater numbers in ongoing efforts to promote peace and to resolve conflicts, including through the appointment of qualified African women as special envoys and representatives of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). In that regard, Namibia welcomes the contribution made by the OAU's African Women's Committee on Peace and Development. Efforts should be made to enhance further cooperation with it. We are convinced that if and when a gender unit is established in the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, a fruitful link with the African Women's Committee will be established.

The mandates of peace missions, peacekeeping operations and peace-building activities need to have provisions on the protection of women. Also, women should take on high-level roles in field-based civilian peace and security operations at senior decision-making and management levels. A good beginning has been made, which we welcome, concerning a gender unit in the peacekeeping missions in Kosovo and in East Timor. We encourage the Secretary-General to establish similar units in other peacekeeping missions. To date, the Security Council has dispatched successful fact-finding missions to several conflict areas. In our view, a senior gender expert should be included in such missions, so that the Council can gain a full appreciation of the gender dimension of ongoing or potential conflicts.

Just last month, world leaders, at the Millennium Summit, commended the report (S/2000/809) of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations chaired by Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, and called for its early consideration and for the early implementation of its relevant recommendations. Like other countries represented here, Namibia laments the Brahimi report's lack of clear and categorical emphasis on gender perspectives and on an effective role for women in conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peace-building. That unfortunate situation and other shortcomings should be rectified during the implementation process.

In that context, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations organized a timely and successful seminar, held from 29 to 31 May 2000 at Windhoek, Namibia. Its theme was mainstreaming a gender perspective in multidimensional peace support operations. The Namibian Government and the people of Namibia were immensely honoured to have hosted that seminar and offered all possible support to ensure its success. The Namibia Plan of Action, inter alia, recommended that

> "Lessons learned from current and prior missions on gender should be incorporated at the planning stage of a new mission" (*S/2000/693, annex II, para. 4*)

and that

> "The current format of reporting, particularly with regard to situation reports and periodic reports of the Secretary-General, should include progress on gender mainstreaming throughout peacekeeping missions". (*para. 8*)

Namibia fully endorses the Plan of Action and urges all concerned to take its proposals into account when formulating policy objectives and implementation plans in respect of the Brahimi report.

In his previous capacity in another principal organ of the United Nations, my Minister for Foreign Affairs had numerous opportunities to address many topical social and humanitarian issues, particularly during the three key special sessions of the General Assembly, relating respectively to small island developing States, to Beijing+5 and to Copenhagen+5. Also, as a follow-up to the Secretary-General's 1998 report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (S/1998/318), we established a working group to monitor the implementation process. We have had the first report of that working group, so ably prepared by the Permanent Representatives of Singapore and of Spain, whom I heartily thank once again for their excellent work and their dedication.

It was pointed out that peace, security and social development are unceasingly and without exception being undermined in one way or another by the easy availability of small arms and light weapons. We are now all agreed about the devastating effects of these deadly weapons on civilian populations in Africa and in other developing countries.

I know that this pressing issue will be dealt with in a coordinated manner in the near future in Mali. Needless to say, this type of weaponry clearly contributes to prolonging armed conflict and imposes severe hardships, especially on women and children. By the same token, the process of disarmament, demobilization, resettlement and rehabilitation of ex-combatants should take into account the special needs of women and girls.

Landmine-awareness campaigns and demining activities cannot ignore the concerns and interests of the real victims, namely women and children. As I said elsewhere, women are not really begging for favours; they are actually demanding their legitimate rights and opportunities to contribute to peace, development and prosperity.

The views expressed today indicate that the maintenance of peace and security is a collective effort. It should therefore involve all women and men for our common good. To that end, let us put our words into deeds to make this, our one world, a peaceful and secure place for this and future generations.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list for this meeting. The next meeting of the Security Council to continue the consideration of the item on the agenda will be fixed in consultation with the members of the Security Council.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.